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Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 31 | Min 22 | Humidity 71% Scattered Showers Sensex 80,501 | Nifty 24,346 | Gold 92,289 | Silver 94,250 | Dollar 84.31 | Euro 95.78 | GBP 112.32

SHAM OFFER

After man loses over ₹12.8 lakh through fake online part-time job offer, police urge people to be alert to employment scams

PAGE 3

POWER STRUGGLE

Kempegowda site allottees having to shell out more to draw power from private layout as electrical sub-station construction work is stuck

PAGE 6

Spells of rain helped Bengaluru log more days with satisfactory air quality index in April as compared to previous months; expert cautions this is only accidental and not due to any changes on the ground

TAKE A DEEP BREATH IN

Rain leads to settling down of dust, particulate matter

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Other than lowering the blistering heat, rain has had a positive impact on the air too. Bengaluru's air quality has improved after a few spells of rain throughout April, data has revealed.

The city witnessed more days with a 'satisfactory' air quality index in April compared with previous months.

Bengaluru logged 27 'satisfactory' and three 'moderate' air quality days in the month. Experts say this is because the rain, along with increased humidity, led to the settling down of air pollutants from vehicular traffic and dust particles.

"Better air quality and a greater number of 'good' air quality days can be attributed to April showers. Bengaluru has witnessed excess rainfall in the month, leading to dust and particulate matter settling down. Although the duration of the showers was low, most of them were of high intensity, washing away pollutants," said an air quality expert.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

"A traffic mix of slow-moving, low-speed, and high-speed vehicles is the biggest issue that Bengaluru is facing, which is impacting the city's air quality

— Professor Gufran Beig, chair at NIAS

Wither hither

Saplings planted on Infantry Road dry up, activists question BBMP's commitment towards greening city

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has been spending a huge amount every year to plant saplings in the city. The BBMP Forest Department, in association with school children and citizens, organises several events to green the city. However, they show no interest in whether the saplings planted by them survive or not.

Environmentalists complain that many saplings planted at many areas in the city are either wilted or withered. They said the BBMP Forest Department has failed to engage workers to water the saplings.

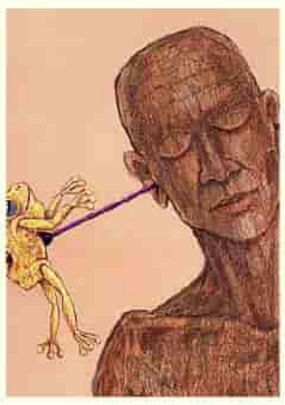
One can see that around 10 saplings, planted on Infantry Road near Plain Street Cross, are withered. The sight of all the withered saplings (mahogany) is disconcerting. The BBMP Horticulture Department officials did not even bother to remove the withered saplings.

"I am shocked to see these saplings in this condition. I have never seen the BBMP Forest Department taking care of the saplings planted on both sides of Infantry Road. The least they can do is to remove the wilted saplings and plant fresh ones to ensure greenery," said Murali G,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Deep reflections



Artisera is presenting 'KARTAB', Gurmeet Marwah's first-ever solo exhibition, featuring paintings, woodcuts, and sculptures. Through his artworks, Gurmeet compels viewers to pause, reflect, and question the unseen forces at play in their existence. **Where: Artisera, Indiranagar; When: April 12 to May 4;**

02 Fandom fun

Fans will get a special chance to meet Purple Turtle, the beloved star of the animated preschool series and book franchise. From drawing corners and puzzle-solving stations to exciting games, there's something for every young adventurer to enjoy. **Where: Phoenix Mall of Asia, Yelahanka; When: May 3 and May 4, 2 pm**

03 Comic relief

Phoenix Mall of Asia is presenting an evening of intelligent humour, observational insights, and laughter-filled storytelling with stand-up comedian Pranav Sharma. **Where: Phoenix Mall of Asia, Yelahanka; When: May 3, 5 pm**

04 Melodious evening

Ruh Voyage is presenting Shaam-e-Sukhan, an evening of romantic ghazal and divine sufi melodies with Koyel Mukherjee, Partha Chatterjee, and Rishabh Chauhan. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: May 4, 7 pm**

05 Swirling chemistry

Aisle Network is bringing the fourth edition of its signature offline series Aisle Experiences. The theme of the event is 'Wine and Sushi Afternoon'. The event is thoughtfully created for like-minded singles who are ready to have meaningful conversations beyond the screen. **Where: Botany Brew and Kitchen, Ashok Nagar; When: May 3, 3 pm to 7 pm**

Brindavan Garden entry fee doubled

The entry fee for the renowned Brindavan Garden near the KRS Dam in Srirangapatna has been doubled from this month, making it more costly for visitors. The Cauvery Neeravari Nigama (CNN) had invited tenders for collection of entry fees, parking charges, and tolls, with the Karnataka Commercial and Industrial Corporation (KCIC) securing a three-year contract.

The new fees are Rs 100 for adults (up from Rs 50), Rs 50 for children aged 3-6 (up from Rs 10), Rs 5 for school children, and Rs 100 for camera use. Vehicle parking charges have also increased, with cars, jeeps, and buses paying up to Rs 200. Toll charges on the Brindavan overpass have been raised to Rs 50 to Rs 100 for three-wheelers, Rs 100-200 for cars, and up to Rs 300 for ten-wheeled lorries. These hikes have drawn criticism from visitors. **— BMB**

Perseverance pays off for SSLC toppers

Toppers share their strategies and experiences, emphasise on consistency in learning, strong foundation, and understanding instead of mugging up

Sridhar Vivan
sridhar.vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Students of Sowbhagya School celebrate SSLC results released on Friday

The Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) results announced on Friday brought in a wave of joy and pride across Karnataka as 22 students created history by scoring a perfect 625 out of 625 marks—a record-breaking feat. Among these shining stars are young achievers whose journeys are as inspiring as their success. From battling health issues to balancing music with academics, these toppers proved that perseverance, planning, and passion pave the road to success.

A battle with pain

Dhanush S from Mysuru, who emerged as one of the state's top scorers, faced a severe health scare just before his Science exam. "I had intense abdominal pain and visited the doctor, who suspected appendicitis or kidney stones. I had to take medication and even vomited before the exam," Dhanush told Mirror. Despite the physical discomfort, he aced the paper. "My parents said they'd be happy even if I just passed, but I surprised them. This shows that last-minute study isn't everything—consistent learning matters," said Dhanush, who has been a topper since Class 8.

Study smart, not always hard

Nithya M Kulkarni, another student who scored full marks, credited her teachers and a focussed approach. "I didn't study all the time. I believe in qualitative learning over quantity. I had aimed for 625 and was confident I could do it. Now, I want to prepare for NEET and pursue medicine," she said.

A total of 22 students scored the perfect 625 marks, while 65 students scored 624, followed by 108 students with 623 marks, 189 with 622, 259 with 621, and 327 with 620 marks

Rooted in basics

Jahnavi SN from Bengaluru emphasised the role of family and foundational knowledge. "My parents never pressured me. I never took tuitions, but always revised what I learned at school on the same day. My foundation was strong, and that made all the difference," she shared.

A multi-talented student, Jahnavi has also cleared exams in Mahabharata, Ramayana, and Hindi Praveena, while learning classical music and the veena. "I've been securing first rank for nearly nine years," she added.

Dreams realised

For Namitha, scoring 625 was a dream come true. "I dedicated my entire day to studies and received strong support from my school. They even extended hours during the exam season to help us prepare better," she said. Namitha now plans to pursue commerce and believes, "Studying shouldn't feel like a burden. Don't mug up, understand what you read."

Burning the midnight oil

Thanya RN, another perfect scorer, swore by self-discipline and late-night study sessions. "If I wasn't satisfied with my preparation, I'd study till 2 or 3 am. I didn't attend tuitions but made sure I understood everything before sleeping," she said.

66.14% regular students clear the exam

Out of 7,90,890 regular fresh students who appeared, 5,23,075 passed, resulting in a pass percentage of 66.14%. Among private fresh candidates, only 1,072 out of 13,154 passed, marking a pass percentage of 8.15%. For regular repeaters, just 628 out of 33,952 cleared the exam (1.85%), while among private repeaters, 209 of 4,177 students passed (5.00%).

Medium-wise analysis shows that students from English medium fared better, with a pass percentage of 78.38% (2,63,333 out of 3,35,974 students). Kannada medium students had a pass percentage of 57.61% (2,46,230 out of 4,27,379). Urdu medium students saw a pass rate of 46.46%, Marathi 53.97%, Telugu 74.56%, Tamil 37.88%, and Hindi 53.72%.

22 students scored the perfect 625 marks, while 65 students scored 624, followed by 108 students with 623 marks, 189 with 622, 259 with 621, and 327 with 620 marks. "There will be a fee exemption for regular fresh students who received a "Not Completed" result in Exam-1, allowing them to appear in Exam-2 without paying the examination fee. However, students aiming to improve their scores, private candidates, and repeaters will have to pay the prescribed fees," said School Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa.

BWSSB & World Bank launch ₹1,323 cr wastewater revamp in city

Five-year sustainable water management push to enhance recycling and groundwater recharge

In an effort to enhance wastewater management and reuse, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), in collaboration with the World Bank, is launching a significant project valued at ₹1,323.46 crores. This ambitious initiative, scheduled to begin shortly, will improve the city's wastewater treatment infrastructure, aiming to address flood conditions, water scarcity, and wastewater management effectively.

A BWSSB official said, "The project will focus on the construction of new sewage treatment plants (STPs), pumping stations, and upgraded sewer networks across various regions of Bangalore. Among the key components are 9 STPs with a total capacity of 140 MLD, the development of a 415-kilometer sewer system, and intermediate pumping stations. These efforts are also geared toward enhancing groundwater levels by recycling treated water for non-potable uses like irrigation. With an estimated total cost of ₹1,115 crores for capital expenditure and ₹208.46 crores for maintenance, BWSSB will finance a portion of the project through its own resources, with the remaining funds provided by the World Bank. This plan, part of a 5-year initiative, will focus on sustainable urban water management, tackling both flooding risks and long-term water scarcity in Bengaluru." **— BMB**

Fake job scam drains ₹12.8L from youth

Man falls victim to online scam, leading to multiple deposits across various accounts; police are investigating this increasing trend of fraudulent schemes targeting job seekers

Atiya Firdos
c-syeda.atiya
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

With cybercrime on the rise, fraudsters are increasingly targeting students and job seekers by preying on financial stress and career hopes. In one such case, a youth lost over ₹12.8 lakh to a fake online part-time job, revealing a growing scam disguised as an opportunity.

According to the complaint filed, the victim received a WhatsApp message on April 9, 2025, from an unknown number promising a part-time job reviewing restaurants and maps for a company named "Seo Valley." The sender, identifying herself as Priya, asked the complainant to join a Telegram group (@Emma45330) where he would receive daily tasks. Trusting the offer, he agreed to start work on April 10.

The victim was instructed to deposit various amounts into a total of nine different bank accounts, all linked to private financial institutions. He was told that these deposits were necessary to process his salary or unlock his commission. Later, the scammer told the victim that his "credit point" was low and demanded an additional ₹3.2 lakh to release the promised earnings.

Despite repeated transactions and reassurances, the promised earnings never arrived. Instead, the victim was caught in a web of lies and mounting financial loss. The total scam amounted to ₹12.8 lakh, transferred across multiple accounts through UPI and direct bank transfers.

A case has been registered under the CEN police station (Central division), and further investigations are underway.

Students beware

Cybersecurity experts warn of a rising trend in education-related frauds, with scammers targeting students using convincing offers such as fake scholarships with links to phishing websites, discounted college admissions, education loans with no verification, free books and study material, guaranteed internships or jobs and technical support for online studies.

In each case, students are asked to fill out forms with personal information or to make small initial deposits, often with the lure of a much larger benefit in return. Once they comply, their information is either sold or used to extract more money through emotional manipulation.

It all starts with a click

Police authorities emphasise that these scams often begin with a single click on a WhatsApp message, Telegram group invite, or a suspicious link promising scholarships or employment.

Police officials caution that cyber fraudsters often exploit human psychology to deceive people. "During this time, when students are finishing their 10th and 12th exams, they become more susceptible to scams, especially with the influx of job opportunities and scholarship offers for higher education. Fraudsters take advantage of this eagerness and urgency. We urge students and their families to stay vigilant, avoid falling for offers that seem too good to be true, and not trust unsolicited messages or random social media accounts," said a police official.

Preventive measures

- Never share personal details like Aadhaar, PAN, or bank information on unverified platforms.
- Avoid clicking on unknown links, especially those sent via WhatsApp or Telegram.
- Verify job and scholarship offers directly with institutions or through government portals.
- Use official websites only for scholarships and job applications.
- Report suspicious activity immediately to cybercrime helplines or the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.

Don't stand under trees during storms: BBMP

A day after a 40-year-old auto driver, Mahesh, was killed when a large tree collapsed on his vehicle near Katriguppe, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) issued a public advisory urging citizens not to stand or park under trees during squalls or heavy rainfall. According to BBMP's report, the storm that hit various parts of Bengaluru led to the collapse of approximately 23 trees and 52 large branches across different zones. The Forest Department, in coordination with zonal officials, has been engaged in clearing all the affected areas. Senior officials, including the Special Commissioner (FECCM), Zonal Commissioners, Deputy and Assistant Conservators of Forests, and other forest staff, visited the site and reviewed the situation. While the civic body has not announced any new concrete steps for preventive pruning of weak or aged trees, it has instead requested the public to avoid standing or sheltering under large trees during inclement weather as a precautionary measure.

The advisory, issued by the Deputy Conservator of Forests, BBMP, aims to minimise casualties during future weather events, but has also drawn criticism from civic activists who argue that trimming and proactive tree maintenance are the need of the hour. –BMB

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BDA increases property taxes despite ₹40 cr in pending dues

Over 1.2 lakh property owners protest poor roads, irregular water supply, and power issues that continue to plague several BDA layouts across the city

Sridhar Vivan
sridhar.vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMirror

The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA), which has failed to provide adequate basic infrastructure, has increased property tax on its properties by 20% to 45%. This comes after the state government raised the prices of essential services like public transport fares, electricity, water, milk, and property registration fees. Following this, BDA's decision to revise the property tax rates has triggered protests from property owners under its jurisdiction.

With over 1.22 lakh people affected, including those in developed areas like Arkavati, Banashankari, and Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, along with properties in BDA-approved layouts, the tax hike has sparked strong opposition from various residents' associations. These associations have already voiced their dissent against the BDA's decision. The BDA collects around ₹55 to ₹60 crore annually from property taxes but has an outstanding dues of about ₹40 crore, accumulated over several years. The state government, in collaboration with the Centre for E-Governance, has updated the property tax details for all properties, and the revised rates were published on the BDA's website on April 28. Starting from April 1, 2025, property taxes will be determined based on the revised guideline value of the properties, as confirmed by BDA sources.

BDA property tax hike stirs anger across Bengaluru Layouts

Property taxes are calculated based on the annual value of the asset, location, area, and any improvements made. However, many areas developed by the BDA lack adequate basic infrastructure, and there has been little progress in providing improvements. This has led to frustration, with residents questioning the fairness of the tax hikes.

Public reactions

Many property owners have expressed their dissatisfaction with the increased tax and the lack of corresponding improvements in infrastructure. "The roads are still under construction, and there is no proper electricity or water connection. Despite this, the property tax has been increased. The authorities are interested in collecting taxes but are not providing the necessary facilities," said S C Narayanaswamy, a resident of Arkavati Layout.

T S Mahesh, President of the Banashankari 6th Stage Residents Welfare Association, also criticized the new charges, pointing out that empty plots are being charged a maintenance fee of ₹1.5 per square foot, even when there is no construction. He demanded that this fee be removed immediately.

Residents are increasingly frustrated with the BDA's negligence in providing basic services, leading to protests. Despite paying taxes for eight years in the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout, many infrastructure projects are still incomplete. "After paying property taxes for so long, no significant infrastructure has been provided. The BDA has increased taxes by 9% to 50% in our area, but the basic services remain underdeveloped. We demand the completion of basic infrastructure before further tax hikes," said Sunil Kiran, a resident of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout.

> **"We're not against paying taxes — we're against paying for promises that were never kept. No roads, no water, no power — just rising bills**
> — TS Mahesh, President, Banashankari 6th Stage Residents Welfare Association

Many are now questioning the value of owning property in BDA-developed areas, preferring to live in rented accommodations instead. The ongoing issues reflect a broader dissatisfaction with BDA's handling of infrastructure and property taxation.

Calm down, emission hotspots still exist

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

According to standards prescribed by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), an air quality index (AQI) of 0-50 is categorised as 'good,' AQI of 51-100 is considered 'satisfactory,' AQI of 101-200 is termed as 'moderate,' and AQI values ranging from 201-300 are considered 'poor.'

Bengaluru also experienced more 'good' air quality days in many areas in March this year compared to the previous year.

The Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System (CAAQMS) at Nisarga Bhavan recorded 28 good air quality days in March this year, in comparison to only seven such days in March 2024. Similarly, Stations in Jaynagar and Mysore Road recorded one 'good' air quality day each. CAAQMS at NIMHANS showed that the area witnessed six 'good' air quality days, and HSR Layout station recorded three such days this year. In 2024, all these stations had recorded zero 'good' air quality days.

With pinch of salt

However, Professor Gufran Beig, chair at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) and an air quality expert, says the increase in 'good' air quality days in March this year is accidental. Notably, Professor Beig and his team conducted an emission hotspot study in the city last year and found that Bengaluru has 80 locations with high levels of particulate matter (PM) 2.5 emissions. Researchers also revealed that the total annual particulate emissions in the city in 2023-24 reached 113 Gg/year for PM10 and 68 Gg/year in the case of PM2.5. Improvements in traffic management, infrastructure, power supply, industrial emissions control, and waste management practices were some recommendations made by the researchers.

"Not much has happened on the ground after we published our study last year. A traffic mix of slow-moving, low-speed, and high-speed vehicles is the biggest issue that Bengaluru is facing, which is impacting the city's air quality. The prime reason is bus stops without designated bays. Buses block lanes while picking up and dropping off passengers, causing emissions. This is the first step towards making the city's hotspots more bearable," said Professor Beig.

Brewers' body writes to CM about beer excise duty spike

Brewers' Association of India (BAI) on Friday expressed their "grave concern" over the recent increase in additional excise duty (AED) on beer by 10 per cent. In effect, with three hikes in the last two years, the AED has been increased by "205 per cent" in Karnataka, it claimed. In a letter addressed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, BAI urged him to immediately withdraw the latest tax increase and put a stop to frequent hikes in taxes, which, they claimed, badly hurt the industry and investment climate in Karnataka.

"This is the fourth tax increase on beer in less than two years, which is almost unheard of anywhere. In July 2023, the AED on beer was increased from 175 per cent to 185 per cent. In February 2024, it was increased to 195 per cent. Then Excise Duty was increased by Rs 10 per bulk litre in January 2025 on the vast majority of beer sold in the state, and now the AED is again being increased to 205 per cent," BAI Director-General Vinod Giri said in his letter to Siddaramaiah. Giri said this raised the price of beer from Rs 160 per bottle to about Rs 200 per bottle. — PTI

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◎ Roadwork progress

Sri Anjaneya Temple Street

BBMP is dismantling the concrete road on 6th Cross, Sri Anjaneya Temple Street (Old Ward 111), and replacing it with kerb stones designed for footpaths.

◎ Parking woes

Malleshwaram

Residents on 1st to 4th Cross, Sirur Park Road, Malleshwaram, are dealing with daily challenges caused by congestion from two-sided parking.

◎ Infrastructure neglect

Old Madras Road

The stretch opposite Altis Cars on Old Madras Road is in deplorable condition. A recent accident damaged my car—perhaps a politician's visit might finally prompt repairs.

3 security tips for your smart home devices

Consumer technology is smarter than ever. This is especially true around the home, where appliances and lights connect with the Internet in new and unprecedented ways. On top of that, devices with built-in virtual assistants make it possible to control some of this hardware with nothing but your voice.

Smart home products offer many advantages, says Maik Morgenstern, chief technology officer for the AV-TEST Institute, but they also come with some dangers.

Here are three security tips from Morgenstern to help you protect yourself while still using new home technology.

1. Use separate and secure passwords

Hackers can easily access the defaults on devices and gain access to data, Morgenstern says. They use search engines, such as Shodan, to gain access to that information.

Shodan is kind of like Google, but for internet-connected devices. It's one of the first search engines of its kind and, unfortunately, allows anyone who uses it to find specific routers, computer servers and more using different search filters. Basically, if someone wants to find your Wi-Fi network's information badly enough, there's a good chance they can.

To protect yourself, Morgenstern recommends changing any default user names or passwords installed by the manufacturer. The device manual or customer service will be able to help you figure this out on your specific device.

When you set up your devices or change the default information, Morgenstern recommends using a separate password for each device and picking ones that are more secure.

Using a secure password for each of your connected devices is one of most effective methods of protecting your information on the internet.

So, rather than using the same, easy-to-remember password for your smart speaker, your internet provider account and your mobile app accounts, use a different password for each one.

You're probably now thinking: 'How am I supposed to remember that many different passwords?' Luckily, there are lots of great apps that not only save your passwords for you but also encrypt them so no one else can steal them. LastPass is one of the most popular of these apps.

2. Secure your Wi-Fi network

"The Wi-Fi network and the router must also be protected against attacks from the outside," Morgenstern says. He recommends setting up a separate guest network for all of your devices in the router configuration. Then, make sure your smart devices connect to the internet through a guest account instead of through your primary login.

This disables many of the entry points that are commonly used by hackers to gain unauthorised access to a system or device.

Instructions for creating a guest account depend on your service provider and the exact hardware you're using, but most Wi-Fi routers include easy and straightforward options for doing so.

3. Being monitored

"Keep in mind that smart home products can not only support, but also monitor, your daily life," Morgenstern says. These devices could be collecting sensitive data, he says. "When choosing devices and cloud services, be aware of the privacy practices of manufacturers and vendors," he says. "Give preference to vendors that only collect data that is necessary to use the devices."

-Femina

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Kempegowda Layout residents caught in a power struggle due to work delays

Site owners forced to draw power from private layouts

| Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Unfinished underground cabling forces residents to tap private power sources

Despite assurances and deadlines, the developmental works at Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout are progressing at a snail's pace, thus causing a lot of problems for those who bought sites at the layout. The site allottees have to postpone the plan to construct their dream homes due to the delay in completing the construction of the electrical sub-station at the layout.

Frustrated by the long-pending infrastructure work, many site allottees at the layout have said they are being forced to spend extra money to source electricity from nearby villages and private layouts. The delay in operationalising the electrical sub-station is hampering not only new constructions but also the lives of those who have already moved in.

"I spent a lot of money to draw electricity to my house that was constructed six months ago. It will be a great help if the BDA engineers complete the pending works and inaugurate the electrical sub-station," said Satish Kumar, one of the site owners.

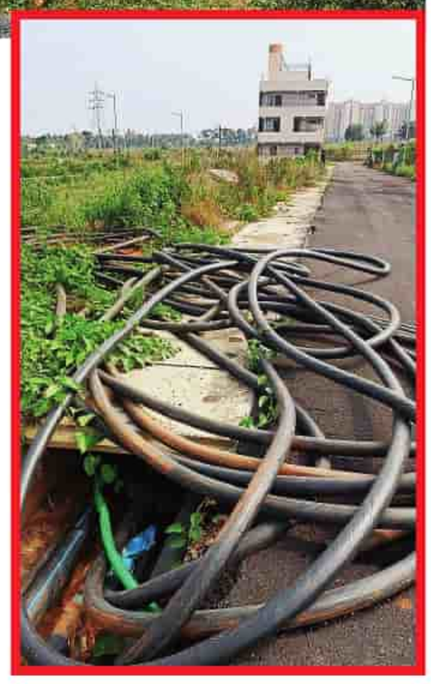
Sharing a similar experience, Madhusudhan Raju, another allottee who constructed his house recently, said the situation has been challenging. "The BDA engineers had promised to lay underground cables to ensure uninterrupted power supply. But the contractors are yet to finish the work. I had to depend on a transformer from a nearby layout, which isn't part of the BDA infrastructure," he said.

> **"The BDA engineers promised to lay the electrical cables underground and facilitate electricity supply without any hassles. However, the contractors are yet to complete laying electric cables underground**
>
> –Madhusudhan Raju, a site owner

Residents have raised concerns over the unfulfilled promises by the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA), especially when it comes to the basic infrastructure. They say that although the BDA announced plans to lay underground cables, many houses under construction are now being provided power through temporary overhead lines drawn from private layouts and nearby villages.

Surya Kiran, spokesperson for the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout Open Forum, questioned the repeated claims of progress. "A year ago, the BDA officials claimed that 80 per cent of the work was done. Even today, they say the same thing. What is stopping them from completing the remaining 20 per cent?" he asked.

He further said the construction of the sub-station at Kommaghatta began over three-and-a-half years ago but is yet to be handed over to the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom). "The delay has left residents with no choice but to depend on unofficial connections for electricity," he added. The forum now plans to invite the Karnataka Legislative Assembly Petition Committee to inspect the area at night to witness the state of the layout and the problems faced by residents.



Responding to the complaints, the BDA Executive Engineer (Electrical) said the delay was due to a pending railway permission for laying cables, which has now been obtained. "All remaining works will be completed in a few days," he assured.

SC slams HC's NCLT interference

The Supreme Court expressed strong disapproval on Friday regarding the Karnataka High Court's repeated interference with National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) orders, despite available appellate options through NCLAT.

The rebuke came during the hearing of Byju's appeal against a Karnataka High Court order that had overturned an NCLT directive maintaining status quo on Aakash Educational Services Limited's shareholding. Byju's eventually withdrew the plea after the Supreme Court indicated reluctance to entertain it.

A bench comprising Justices PS Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi dismissed the withdrawn petition, criticising the High Court's repeated interventions in NCLT matters. The bench also noted similar past instances where such High Court orders were later reversed.

The legal tussle centres on Aakash Institute's shareholding, now controlled by Manipal Systems, with major stakes held by Byju's (Think & Learn Pvt. Ltd.) and Singapore Topco, backed by private equity firm Blackstone. On March 27, the NCLT had ordered status quo on the shareholding to prevent dilution of Byju's stake.

However, Justice M Nagaprasanna of the Karnataka High Court later overturned that order, citing lack of opportunity for Aakash to be heard. The matter was remanded to NCLT for fresh consideration, with Aakash assuring it would not alter Byju's stake until April 30.

Controversy also surrounds proposed amendments to Aakash's Articles of Association. Singapore Topco opposed the changes over concerns of a potential 6.8% stake dilution. Byju's lender, Glas Trust, alleged that the former management had sought to reduce its Aakash holding.

While Aakash defended the amendment as necessary for securing funding, the NCLT initially stayed its implementation. The High Court suspended this stay, allowing the amendment process to proceed. Singapore Topco challenged the High Court's jurisdiction before SC, which directed Aakash to approach NCLAT.

–BMB

Kolar farmers halt all tomato export to Pakistan

| Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Kolar farmers halt exports, braving losses to protest terror attack

PAHALGAM FALLOUT

Following the recent terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, the Central Government has imposed trade restrictions on Pakistan. Standing firmly in support of this decision, farmers and traders from Kolar district have voluntarily suspended all tomato exports to Pakistan.

Kolar's APMC, known as Asia's second-largest tomato market, plays a crucial role in the export of high-quality tomatoes. These are usually sent not only across Indian states but also to neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Nepal. June and July are peak harvesting months, during which Kolar typically exports 800 to 900 tonnes of tomatoes and other vegetables to Pakistan every week. However, in a show of solidarity and patriotism following the Pahalgam attack, the farming community has unanimously decided to halt all exports to Pakistan, despite the expected financial setback.

"We had earlier stopped exports to Pakistan after the Pulwama attack. In other instances, we continued the trade on humanitarian grounds. But this time, no matter the loss, not a single tomato will go to Pakistan," said Srinath, a prominent trader from Kolar.

Tomatoes from Kolar usually take about 42 hours by road to reach the Pakistan border, from where they are picked up by Pakistani traders. The years-old trade route has now come to a complete halt with the voluntary suspension by local farmers and traders.

Dry fruit prices spike after supply from Kashmir dries out

| Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

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The prices of dry fruits have surged sharply in Bengaluru, with rates rising between 200 and 700 per kg within a week. The increase follows a recent terror attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, which has disrupted the transportation of dry fruits from the region.

Sources said the supply from Kashmir to Bengaluru's key wholesale hubs, including Shivajinagar's Russell Market, has almost come to a standstill. Traders report a shortage of items like saffron, apricots, walnuts, walnut oil, Mamra almonds, honey, and dried plums most of which are sourced from the Valley.

To add to the strain, Afghanistan's dry fig (anjur) season is currently at its peak, but about 300 trucks carrying the produce are reportedly stuck at the Attari border, limiting supply further. A trader said saffron, widely used by pregnant women and in star hotels, has seen a significant surge in demand. Kashmiri garlic, preferred by heart patients, has also become more expensive. "Saffron prices have jumped from 90,000 to 1.4 lakh per kg in a month. Kashmiri garlic now sells at 2,500 per kg, up from 1,800," he said.

Walnuts have gone up from 500 to 800 per kg, Afghan anjur from 1,200 to 1,800, and Mamra almonds from 1,200 to 1,800. Even gulqand, earlier priced at 200– 300 for 600–700 grams, now costs around 900.

Dry fruits are typically transported from Kashmir to Jammu, then to Delhi, and finally to cities like Bengaluru. But with loading halted in Kashmir, only small consignments are arriving via costlier routes. Traders warned that continued disruptions could lead to further price hikes.

Nelamangala-Sondekoppa emerges as city's realty hotspot

Nelamangala-Sondekoppa Road areas are rapidly developing on par with Bengaluru, and is emerging as a lucrative real estate destination. Investing in plots here is expected to yield significant returns in the future.

Located just 27 km from Bengaluru's central areas, Nelamangala is quickly gaining traction as a real estate hotspot, thanks to several upcoming infrastructure projects, including the proposed airport.

The town enjoys a strategic position at the junction of NH-48 (connecting Bengaluru to Mangaluru) and NH-4 (linking Mumbai to Chennai), and is well-connected to key routes such as Doddaballapur Road, Kunigal Bypass Road, Byadarahalli Road, and Sondekoppa Road.

Surrounded by established residential and industrial zones like Dasanapura, Arasinakunte, Adarsha Nagar, and the Dabaspete Industrial Area, Nelamangala offers both residential comfort and employment opportunities.

The presence of several small and medium-scale industries, along with a logistics park just 11 km away, has further fuelled demand for real estate.

The area is also well-equipped with quality educational and healthcare institutions, including Orchid International, Queenie Convent, Ratan Memorial School, and MS Ramaiah Harsha Hospital, making it an attractive option for families looking to settle in a well-connected suburban area.

Real estate consultants point to the rapid development along Sondekoppa Road as a significant driver of the region's growth.

The upcoming Metro expansion and the ambitious KWIN City project are expected to be game changers for the area. KWIN City, which spans 5,800 acres across Nelamangala, Dabaspet, and Doddaballapur, is being touted as a futuristic development that will revolutionise infrastructure in the region.

According to real estate consultant Anusha Ramappa, the ongoing upgrade of Sondekoppa Road into a double road will improve accessibility and enhance the value of nearby residential layouts. With the Metro line now extended from Nagasandra to Madavara, connectivity to central Bengaluru is expected to improve significantly.

Nelamangala's proximity to Kempegowda International Airport just 52 km away and its designation as one of Bengaluru's proposed satellite towns further appeal.

-Prakash VL

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Bengaluru attracts major real estate investments

Bengaluru continues to cement its position as a key investment destination in India's real estate landscape, as per the latest report jointly released by CBRE South Asia Pvt. Ltd. and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Titled Bricks & Billions – Mapping the Financing Landscape of Real Estate, the report highlights evolving financing trends and investor sentiment across Indian cities, with Bengaluru emerging as a major beneficiary of institutional capital.

While Mumbai recorded the highest inflow of USD 6.9 billion—roughly 26% of total equity investments—Bengaluru, along with Delhi-NCR, attracted a combined USD 16.5 billion, making up about 62% of overall investments nationwide. The city's performance reflects its strong fundamentals: a concentration of investment-grade assets, sound infrastructure, a skilled workforce, and sustained demand across residential, commercial, and technology-driven sectors.

Land and development sites attracted the highest share of equity inflows, accounting for 44% of total investments, followed by built-up office assets at 32%. This trend indicates growing investor appetite for long-term capital deployment in cities like Bengaluru, which offer scalable, high-quality development potential. Between 2022 and 2024, India received a total of USD 26.7 billion in real estate equity, underscoring Bengaluru's credibility as a stable and high-growth market.

The report also points to Bengaluru's emerging role in the rise of alternate asset classes such as data centres, healthcare facilities, student housing, and co-living spaces. In 2024 alone, around 220 acres of land were acquired for data centre development across India, with Bengaluru leading due to its robust IT infrastructure and supportive government policies.

Positive macroeconomic indicators are expected to further support the sector. The Reserve Bank of India's shift in policy stance from 'neutral' to 'accommodative', along with two repo rate cuts in 2025, is expected to lower borrowing costs. This is likely to boost both developer activity and end-user affordability factors especially relevant to Bengaluru's expanding housing and commercial office markets.

City's emerging role in the rise of alternate asset classes such as data centres, healthcare facilities, student housing, and co-living spaces

Investors continue to view the city's residential and office segments as core opportunities. Bengaluru's residential market is seeing high project launches, increased homeownership, and rising disposable incomes. Office space leasing remains strong, driven by IT, BFSI, engineering, and life sciences firms, with Grade A assets maintaining high occupancy rates.

Environmental sustainability is also gaining prominence, with nearly 20% of investors prioritising green-certified developments. Bengaluru's early adoption of sustainability measures positions it well to attract ESG-focused capital.

While tier-II cities garnered around USD 3 billion in investments approximately 10% of total inflows Bengaluru retains its edge, offering a blend of scale, infrastructure, and regulatory stability that newer markets are still building towards.

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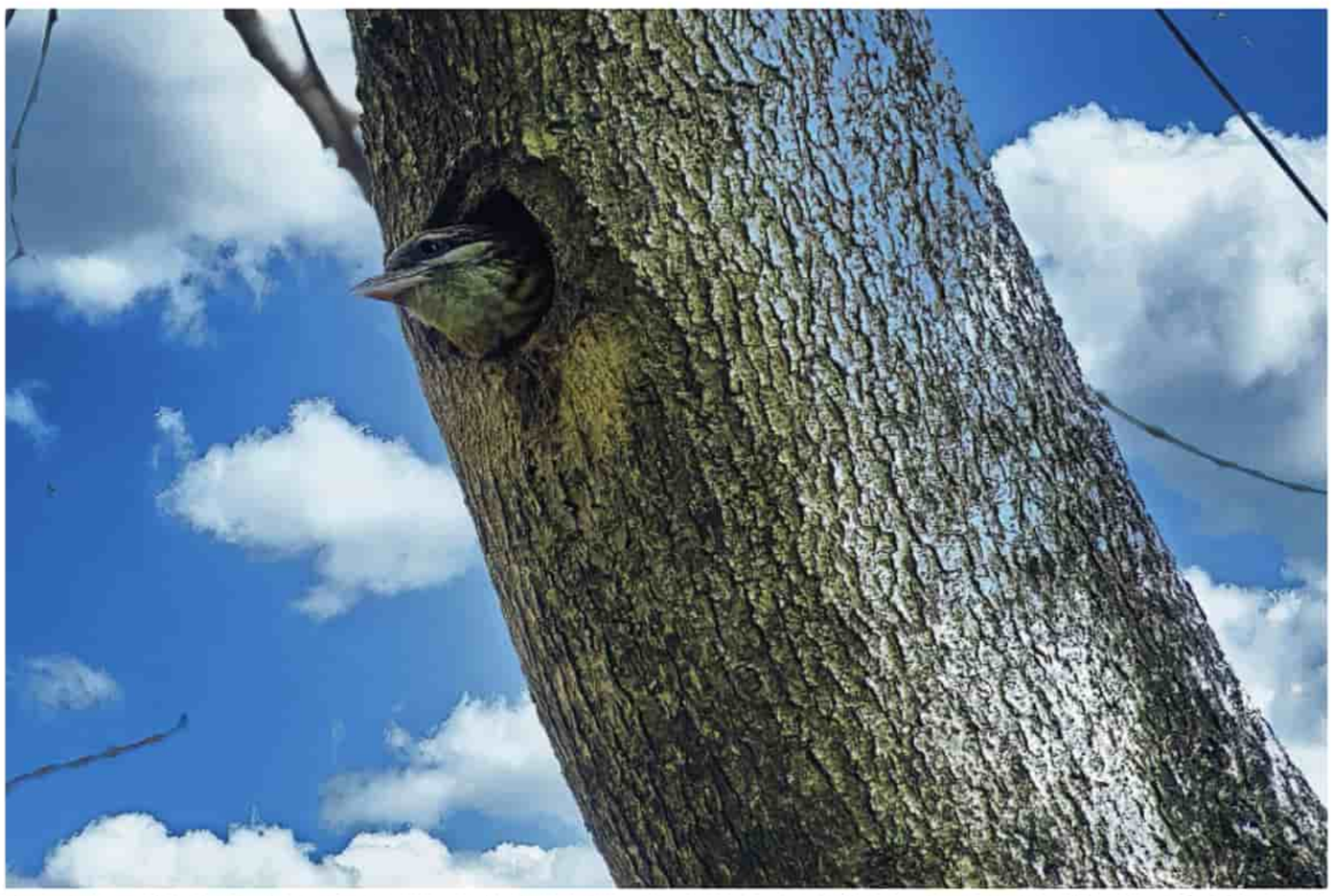
STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

NEST WATCH

The picture captures a White-cheeked Barbet peeking out from its carefully carved nest.

The picture was clicked by reader **Chandar Natarajan**



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Residents demand immediate action over pothole-ridden roads

Despite repeated complaints to local authorities, multiple petitions, and community meetings to address the issue, there has been no significant action taken, say residents

| Yashaswini Krishna
Yashaswini.k@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Residents of Siddanna Layout in Banashankari are grappling with a severe pothole problem, leaving residents and motorists in distress. The condition of the roads has become a daily challenge for the community, leading to accidents, vehicle damage, and growing frustration among locals.

The issue affects everyone in the neighbourhood. Motorists, pedestrians, and residents alike are suffering the consequences. "Navigating these roads is like playing a game of dodgeball. Every day, I worry about damaging my car or getting into an accident," shared Ganesh Kumar. The pothole problem has been escalating over the past few months, with the monsoon season exacerbating the situation. Despite repeated complaints to the local authorities, there has been no significant action taken to address the issue.

The roads in the area are riddled with potholes, making it nearly impossible for vehicles to pass smoothly. The situation is particularly dire on the main road, which sees heavy traffic daily. The primary reason for the pothole issue is poor road maintenance and inadequate drainage systems. During the monsoon season, water accumulates on the roads, further damaging the already weak infrastructure. Lokesh, a local shop owner, remarked, "The authorities repair the roads superficially. Once the rain comes, it's back to square one. We need a permanent solution."

The roads in the area are riddled with potholes, making it nearly impossible for vehicles to pass smoothly

The potholes have not only caused inconvenience but have also led to several accidents. Meghana, a resident who recently met with an accident due to a pothole, recounted her ordeal, "I was driving back home when I hit a deep pothole. My bike skidded, and I fell. I ended up with a fractured arm. It is terrifying to think this can happen to anyone."

The potholes have not only caused inconvenience but have also led to several accidents

The situation has created a ripple effect on the community's daily life. School buses are often delayed, emergency services struggle to navigate the roads, and local businesses face a decline in customers. "Driving kids to school has become a nightmare. The bus shakes violently every time we hit a pothole, and I'm constantly worried about the children's safety," said Anil, a school bus driver.

Despite the growing outcry, the response from the local municipality has been lacklustre. Residents have organised multiple petitions and community meetings to address the issue. "We have been voicing our concerns for months. It's high time the authorities take this seriously. Our safety and well-being are at stake," said Savitha, a local activist.

The residents of Siddanna Layout are desperate for a solution to their pothole woes. The community's collective plea is for immediate and effective action to repair the roads and prevent further accidents and inconveniences.

DID YOU KNOW?

Scientists once thought only humans could bob to music. Ronan the sea lion helped prove them wrong. Ronan the sea lion can still keep a beat after all these years. She can groove to rock and electronica. But the 15-year-old California sea lion's talent shines most in bobbing to disco hits like 'Boogie Wonderland'. "She just nails that one," swaying her head in time to the tempo changes, said Peter Cook, a behavioral neuroscientist at New College of Florida, who has spent a decade studying Ronan's rhythmic abilities.
Not many animals show a clear ability to identify and move to a beat aside from humans, parrots, and some primates. But then there's Ronan, a bright-eyed sea lion that has scientists rethinking the meaning of music. A former rescue sea lion, she burst to fame around a decade ago after scientists reported her musical skills. From age 3, she has been a resident at the University of California, Santa Cruz's Long Marine Laboratory, where researchers including Cook have tested and honed her ability to recognise rhythms. Ronan joined a select group of animal movers and shakers, which also includes Snowball the famed dancing cockatoo, that together upended the long-held idea that the ability to respond to music and recognise a beat was distinctly human. — AP

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Was Commander of Northern Command 'removed' after Pahalgam attack?

Claim: Several social media accounts circulated posts claiming that the Commander of Indian Army's Northern Command, Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, has been 'removed' from his post after the Pahalgam attack.
Fact: Misleading. The officer attained superannuation on April 30, after completing an illustrious career of four decades in the Indian Army, and was not removed from his post.

The government's Press Information Bureau (PIB) on Wednesday debunked claims made in posts by "several pro-Pakistan social media accounts" that the Commander of Indian Army's Northern Command, Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, has been 'removed' from his post after the Pahalgam attack.

The officer attained superannuation on April 30, after completing an illustrious career of four decades in the Indian Army. "Several pro-Pakistan social media accounts falsely claim that Northern Commander Lt Gen Suchindra Kumar has been removed from his post after the Pahalgam incident," PIB Fact Check wrote on X, declaring the information to be fake. It posted a collage of such 'reports' having false claims on the microblogging platform.

There have been several misleading posts on social media amid heightened tension between New Delhi and Islamabad following the recent terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir. On April 22, terrorists shot dead 26 people, mostly tourists, at a meadow in Baisaran of South Kashmir's Pahalgam.

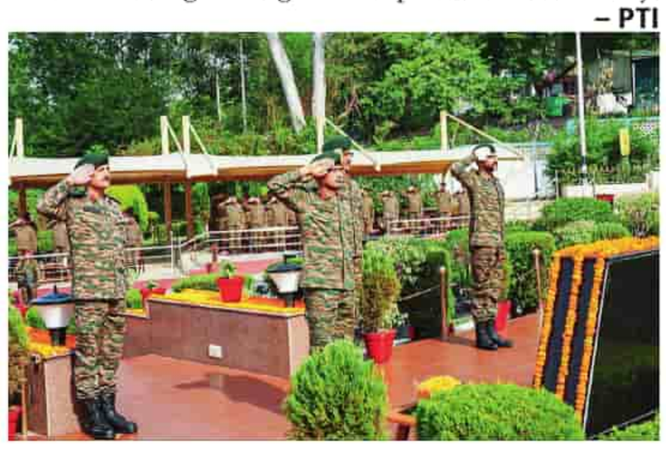
Lt Gen Kumar had assumed charge as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) of the Udhampur-based Northern Command of the Indian Army in February 2024. He attained superannuation on April 30. Lt Gen Pratik Sharma will be the new General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Northern Command, and will assume office on Thursday.

Lt Gen Kumar had earlier served as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff. In another post on X on Wednesday, PIB Fact Check flagged that an X handle is circulating a fake image on social media that falsely claims that a formal Court of Inquiry has been ordered against Lt Gen Kumar.

The Northern Command in a post wrote that Lt Gen Kumar laid a wreath to honour the supreme sacrifice of the bravehearts at Dhruva War Memorial, Udhampur, upon superannuation and relinquishing command of the Northern Command. The PIB, on Monday, had flagged that some pro-Pakistan social media accounts are falsely claiming that 'confidential documents' related to the preparedness of the Indian Army have been leaked. In a post on X, PIB Fact Check dubbed these documents as fake.

The Ministry of Defence on Sunday cautioned that a misleading message is doing the rounds on WhatsApp, claiming that the government has opened a bank account seeking donations for the modernisation of the Indian Army. In a statement, the Ministry debunked the message and urged people to "remain cautious and not fall prey to such fraudulent messages". The PIB Fact Check had also alerted people about this misleading message with a post on X on Sunday.

— PTI



Ambulance crashes into vendor pushcarts; kills 1

Speeding ambulance rams vehicles, pedestrians on BTS Road; vendor killed, 6 injured

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A speeding Sanjeevini ambulance collided with multiple pushcart vehicles and pedestrians on BTS Road near RK Dosa Camp, under Wilson Garden Traffic Police jurisdiction, early Thursday morning. The accident occurred at around 8:30 am and claimed the life of a pushcart vendor while injuring six others.

According to police and eyewitnesses, the ambulance (KA-03-AB-3838), driven recklessly by 30-year-old Siranjeevi, collided with two fruit pushcarts, an auto rickshaw, a scooter, and several pedestrians. Ramesh (49), a watermelon vendor operating from a pushcart, succumbed to serious injuries to his chest and leg and was declared dead later at Sanjay Gandhi Hospital.

Six others sustained various injuries: pedestrian Somasundaram (leg and head), Nagaraju (leg), Shivaramaswamy (hands, head, chest), scooter rider Praveen Kumar (right leg), Brahmanand Kumar (foot and toe), and auto driver Pawan (left hand). Most were rushed to Abhay Hospital by passersby, while Shivaramaswamy was later shifted to Victoria Hospital due to the severity of his injuries.

The accused, Siranjeevi, was apprehended at the scene, and a case has been registered under CR No. 50/2025 under Sections 281, 125(a), and 106 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The deceased's brother, Nagaraju, who also suffered minor injuries, filed the official complaint. Traffic police officials have confirmed that legal proceedings are underway against the driver for causing death and injuries through negligent and dangerous driving.

Ganja worth ₹7.25 lakh seized

Kumaraswamy Layout Police arrested three individuals involved in the illegal sale of ganja and seized drugs and assets worth ₹7.25 lakh. Acting swiftly on a tip-off received on April 29, police launched a late-evening operation on the 5th Main Road of Kanakanagar. The informant alerted authorities about three men selling ganja from a car. Officers raided the location and apprehended the trio, catching them red-handed with 29 kg 31 grams of ganja.

The arrested individuals confessed during interrogation that they were sourcing the contraband from Mysore, where another accused, currently absconding, procured the drug at a cheaper rate. The trio admitted to reselling the ganja in Bengaluru at higher prices to earn hefty profits. Along with the drug haul, police seized an electronic weighing machine, two mobile phones, and the Innova car used in the operation.

A case has been registered under the NDPS Act at Kumaraswamy Layout Police Station. The three accused were produced before the Court on Wednesday and have been remanded to judicial custody.

Bandh in Mangaluru after Suhas Shetty killing

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Tension prevails in Mangaluru after Suhas Shetty, the prime accused in the 2022 Fazil murder case, was killed by unidentified assailants near Kinnipadavu Cross under Bajpe Police Station limits on Thursday evening.

Suhas was travelling with five others when their vehicle was intercepted by attackers in a car and a pickup truck. Armed with lethal weapons, the assailants assaulted Suhas, leaving him severely injured. He was rushed to AJ Hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

In the aftermath, prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Indian Code of Justice have been imposed across the Mangaluru City Police Commissionerate limits from 6 am on Friday (May 2) until 6 am on May 6 to maintain law and order.

Private buses off roads, most shops shut; few that opened forced to close

The murder has triggered widespread tension, particularly due to Suhas Shetty's connection to the retaliatory killing of Mohammed Fazil, which itself followed the murder of BJP youth leader Praveen Nettaru in 2022. Shetty, reportedly a former Bajrang Dal cow protection unit member, had since distanced himself from active roles.

City shuts down amid bandh call

In response to the murder, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad called for a bandh across the Dakshina Kannada district. As a result, private buses have suspended operations, and most shops and commercial establishments in Mangaluru remain shut. A few that opened early in the morning were reportedly forced to close.

The bandh also disrupted student commute, leaving many stranded at the KSRTC bus stand. Colleges and institutions across the city have declared closures as a precaution.

In light of the escalating tension, ADGP (Law and Order) R Hitendra has arrived in Mangaluru to oversee the situation. Incidents of stone-pelting and isolated assaults have been reported from several parts of the city, prompting heightened deployment of police personnel.

Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara said the government will not spare anyone involved in the murder of Suhas Shetty. "We have already formed four special teams, and whoever is responsible for the murder will soon be apprehended and brought to book. Whoever it is, whichever party they may belong to, we will not spare them," he said.

CT Ravi's charges stand, HC rules

The Karnataka High Court rejected a petition on Friday to dismiss charges against BJP Legislator CT Ravi, who was accused of using derogatory language towards Congress Legislator Laxmi Hebbalkar in the State Council at Belagavi.

Justice M Nagaprasanna stated whilst delivering the verdict that offensive words or gestures against women that outrage modesty cannot be protected under legislative privilege when they lack a connection to house proceedings.

The complete order details are pending release.

Following his December 19, 2024, arrest under Sections 75 and 79 of the BNS, Ravi secured bail through the High Court's intervention. Subsequently, he petitioned to nullify the charges. The court concluded its hearing and reserved judgment on February 24.

Senior Advocate Prabhuling K Navadgi, representing Ravi, cited Article 194(2) of the Constitution, arguing that the Speaker holds exclusive authority to discipline members, including expulsion or reprimand, for statements made within the house.

Navadgi emphasised that Article 194(2) provides MLAs complete protection for their legislative statements and votes, questioning the case's registration based on in-house remarks.

He raised concerns about CID's authority to investigate an incident already addressed by the House Chairman.

The court questioned whether immunity extends to statements unrelated to legislative discussions, to which Navadgi responded that Article 194(2) offers unconditional protection for any statement made in the legislature.

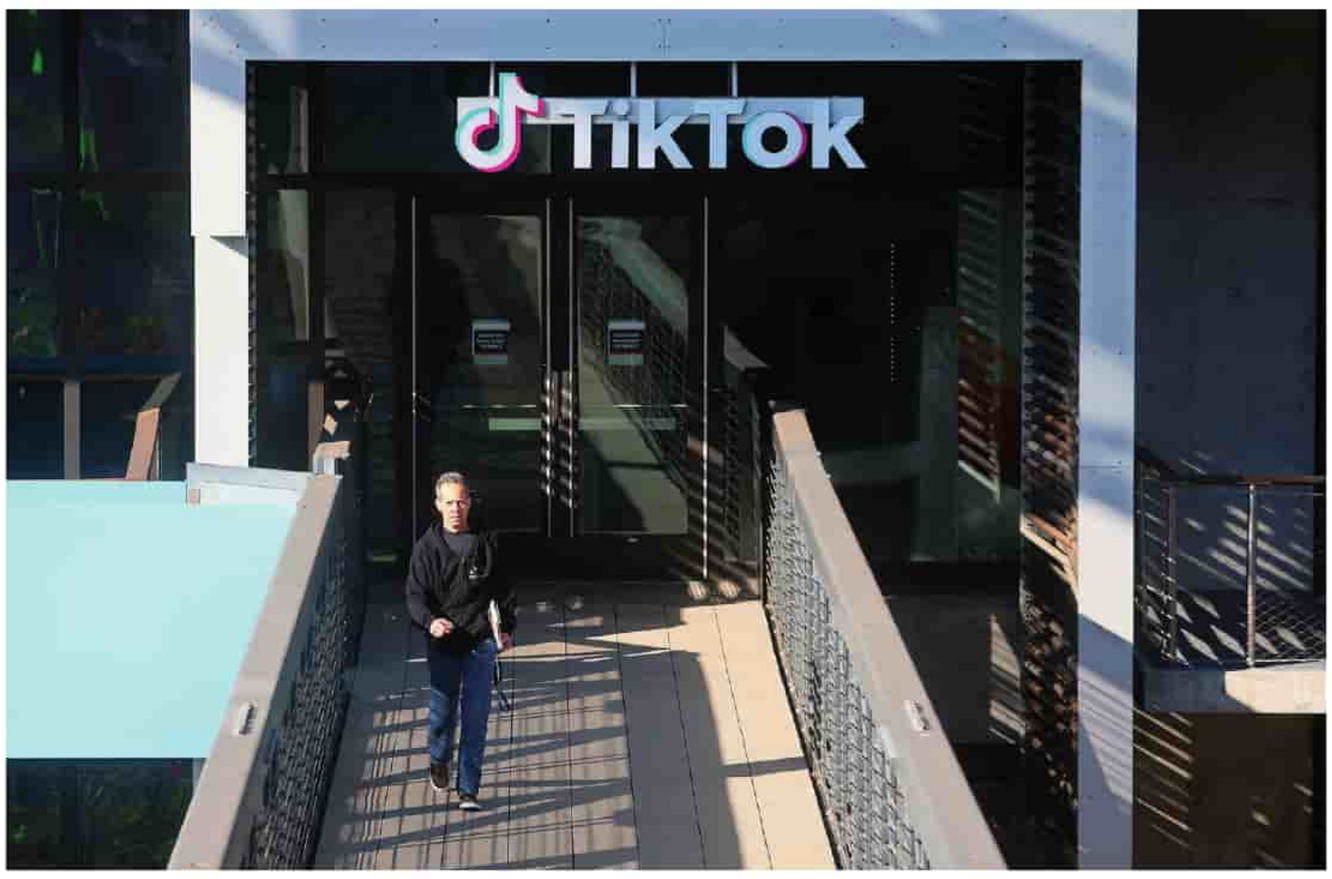
Navadgi stressed that the Article's wording deliberately omits specifying a connection to debates, aiming to enable unrestricted legislative speech.

Special Public Prosecutor Belliappa countered that Supreme Court precedents established limited rather than absolute immunity for legislators.

The prosecution highlighted that legislators do not enjoy complete immunity for all actions within Parliament or the Legislature. —BMB

TikTok hit with 530 million euro privacy fine in investigation into China data transfer

Invasion of privacy



European Union privacy watchdogs fined TikTok 530 million euros ($600 million) on Friday after a four-year investigation found that the video sharing app's data transfers to China breached the EU's strict data privacy rules.

Ireland's Data Protection Commission also sanctioned TikTok for not being transparent with users about where their personal data was being sent and ordered the company to comply with the rules within six months.

The Irish national watchdog serves as TikTok's lead data privacy regulator in the 27-nation EU because the company's European headquarters is based in Dublin.

"TikTok failed to verify, guarantee and demonstrate that the personal data of (European) users, remotely accessed by staff in China, was afforded a level of protection essentially equivalent to that guaranteed within the EU," Deputy Commissioner Graham Doyle said in a statement.

TikTok said it disagreed with the decision and plans to appeal.

The company said in a blog post that the decision focuses on a "select period" ending in May 2023, before it embarked on a data localization project called Project Clover that involved building three data centers in Europe.

"The policy, which has since been updated, failed to explain that data processing involved remote access to personal data stored in Singapore and the United States by personnel based in China

"The facts are that Project Clover has some of the most stringent data protections anywhere in the industry, including unprecedented independent oversight by NCC Group, a leading European cybersecurity firm," said Christine Grahn, TikTok's European head of public policy and government relations. "The decision fails to fully consider these considerable data security measures."

TikTok, whose parent company ByteDance is based in China, has been under scrutiny in Europe over how it handles personal information of its users amid concerns from Western officials that it poses a security risk over user data sent to China. In 2023, the watchdog fined the company hundreds of millions of euros in a separate child privacy investigation.

The Irish watchdog said its investigation found that TikTok failed to address "potential access by Chinese authorities" to European users' personal data under Chinese laws on anti-terrorism, counter-espionage, cybersecurity and national intelligence that were identified as 'materially diverging' from EU standards."

Grahn said TikTok has "has never received a request for European user data from the Chinese authorities, and has never provided European user data to them."

Under the EU rules, known as the General Data Protection Regulation, European user data can only be transferred outside of the bloc if there are safeguards in place to ensure the same level of protection.

The investigation, which opened in September 2021, also found that TikTok's privacy policy at the time did not name third countries, including China, where user data was transferred. The watchdog said the policy, which has since been updated, failed to explain that data processing involved "remote access to personal data stored in Singapore and the United States by personnel based in China."

TikTok faces further scrutiny from the Irish regulator, which said that the company had provided inaccurate information throughout the inquiry by saying that it didn't store European user data on Chinese servers. It wasn't until April that it informed the regulator that it discovered in February that some data had in fact been stored on Chinese servers. **AP**

Google will seek to avoid ad tech spinoff

Alphabet's Google on Friday will urge a judge to avoid breaking up its advertising technology business as part of an effort to end its control of tools vital to selling ads on the internet.

U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema in Alexandria, Virginia, is holding the hearing to get a broad sense of potential remedies to restore competition in markets for technology that helps website publishers sell ads. The judge will then schedule further proceedings to decide specific measures.

Google is hoping to head off a scenario like the one currently playing out in a separate case in Washington, where a judge is considering the Department of Justice's bid to make Google sell its Chrome Web browser to address the company's online search monopoly.

The company hopes to avoid getting to that point in the ad tech case by convincing Brinkema that a forced selloff is not legally an option.

Google has said it would be inappropriate to make the company sell tools that do more than just sell website ads.

The DOJ has told Brinkema that

Google should have to sell off at least its Google Ad Manager, which includes the company's publisher ad server and ad exchange.

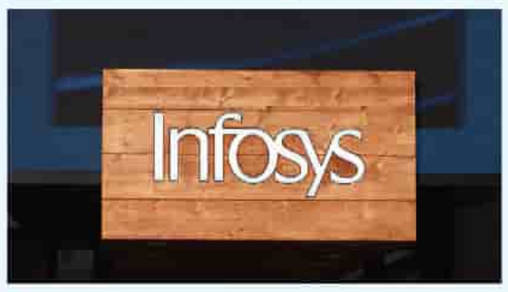
Publisher ad servers are platforms used by websites to store and manage their digital ad inventory. Along with ad exchanges, the technology lets news publishers and other online content providers make money by selling ads.

Brinkema ruled in April that Google unlawfully tied publishers' use of its ad exchange to use of its ad server, and enacted anticompetitive policies that were "not in its publisher customers' best interests." The conduct harmed competition, and hurt publishers and ultimately internet users, she said.

Google has previously explored selling its ad exchange to appease European antitrust regulators, Reuters reported in September. **Reuters**

BITS & BYTES

INFOSYS' ACQUISITION



Infosys on Friday said it has completed the acquisition of Australian cybersecurity services firm The Missing Link in an all-cash deal of AUD 98 million (about Rs 532 crore). Infosys has acquired the firm through its wholly-owned subsidiary Infosys Singapore Pte Ltd, according to a regulatory filing made last month. The acquisition strengthens Infosys' cybersecurity capabilities while bolstering its presence in the fast-growing Australian market, the company said.

"This strategic investment further strengthens Infosys' cybersecurity capabilities..." the company said. **PTI**

SPACECRAFT TO FALL

A Soviet-era spacecraft meant to land on Venus in the 1970s is expected to soon plunge uncontrolled back to Earth. It's too early to know where the half-ton mass of metal might come down or how much of it will survive reentry, according to space debris-tracking experts.

Dutch scientist Marco Langbroek predicts the failed spacecraft will reenter around May 10. He estimates it will come crashing in at 150 mph (242 kph), if it remains intact. "While not without risk, we should not be too worried," Langbroek said in an email. The object is relatively small and, even if it doesn't break apart, "the risk is similar to that of a random meteorite fall, several of which happen each year," he said. **AP**

M&S FIGHTS HACKERS

British retailer Marks & Spencer said Friday that it's "working day and night" to resolve a cyberattack nearly two weeks ago that has left it unable to process any online orders, a day after luxury London department store Harrods confirmed it had become the latest target. With Co-op also having shut down some of its information technology systems as a precaution following a hack, there are concerns within the retail sector that hackers are taking calculated risks by trying to replicate the actions of others to cause as much disruption as they can.

A hacking group known as Scattered Spider is said to be behind the M&S attack. **AP**

Women harassed, molested on the road

In one case, man hounds woman for her Insta ID; in other, woman groped near business park

| Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
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A man was arrested by the Bagalagunte police for allegedly harassing a young woman on the road by forcefully demanding her Instagram ID and threatening her with violence around 10.30 pm near T Dasarahalli two days ago.

The accused, identified as Vinod, reportedly blocked the woman's path while she was returning home from work and demanded her Instagram handle. Alarmed by the confrontation, the woman immediately called her mother for help.

However, before her mother could arrive, Vinod allegedly dragged the woman on the road and continued to harass her. Upon reaching the location, the mother was also verbally abused and threatened by the accused, who allegedly said he would kill both of them.

Local residents who witnessed the altercation intervened and alerted the police. A team from Bagalagunte Police Station arrived at the spot promptly and took the accused into custody.

The woman sustained minor injuries during the incident and is currently receiving treatment at a hospital. Based on the complaint filed by the victim's mother, a case has been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code. The police have assured that a thorough investigation is underway and warned of strict action against individuals found harassing women in public spaces.

Woman molested in Marathahalli

A 23-year-old woman was molested by an unknown man on a two-wheeler near the main gate of a business park in Marathahalli around 11.30 pm on April 30.

According to the FIR, the accused first approached the woman from behind and inappropriately touched her while she was walking along the road. Shockingly, within minutes, he circled back and repeated the act before fleeing the scene. The woman immediately filed a complaint, stating that although she cried for help, bystanders failed to respond or intervene.

The police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and confirmed that efforts are underway to identify and arrest the culprit. They are scanning CCTV footage from the area and checking vehicle registrations in the vicinity.

This incident comes close on the heels of another sexual harassment case reported in Sadduguntepalya, raising concerns about women's safety on Bengaluru's streets, especially at night. The Marathahalli Police have urged citizens to report suspicious activities promptly and assured that strict action will be taken against the offenders. —BMB

Player who had 'biggest impact' on Virat Kohli

Boucher played for RCB from 2008-10 when Virat was just figuring out international cricket

Star India and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) batter Virat Kohli recalled how former South African wicketkeeper-batter Mark Boucher had an impact on him during his initial years in the Indian Premier League (IPL), saying that his conversations with the Protean legend "stunned" him.

RCB's leading run-getter in IPL history was speaking on RCB Podcast's upcoming episode, a trailer of which was released on the team's official X handle.

Speaking on his conversations with Boucher, who he admitted called him to some golf games, Virat said, "Out of all players I played with initially, Boucher had the biggest impact on me. He figured out what my weaknesses could be, If I wanted to go to the next level, this is what I need to do, without me asking him anything. He told me that 'when I comes to commentate in India three-four years from now and I do not see you playing for India, you would do a disservice to yourself. So he really stunned me with the conversations he had with me."

Boucher played for RCB from 2008-10, when Virat was slowly finding his feet in international cricket and had not played Test cricket for India. In 27 matches, Boucher made 388 runs at an average of 29.85, with a half-century. —ANI

Prajwal rape trial: Plea for postponement dismissed

The Karnataka High Court dismissed a plea on Friday seeking postponement of the rape trial against suspended Janata Dal (Secular) leader Prajwal Revanna.

Justice Vishwajith Shetty rejected the petition filed by Revanna's mother requesting a delay to allow Revanna to secure new legal representation at the trial court. The Court verbally stated that any order to postpone the trial could potentially discourage the trial court. "If orders are passed asking the trial court to adjourn it, it will demoralise (the trial court)," he stated.

The judge indicated his unwillingness to consider the petition filed by Prajwal's mother, Bhavani Revanna. "I will pass orders, I will not entertain," the judge declared.

Prajwal is accused as the primary suspect in four cases registered after the online circulation of over 2,900 clips showing sexual assault of numerous women. On April 3, the Bengaluru trial court filed criminal charges against Revanna, including rape, voyeurism, criminal intimidation and unauthorised distribution of private images. Bhavani faces accusations of kidnapping and intimidating a woman victim. —BMB

I get threat calls too, says CM

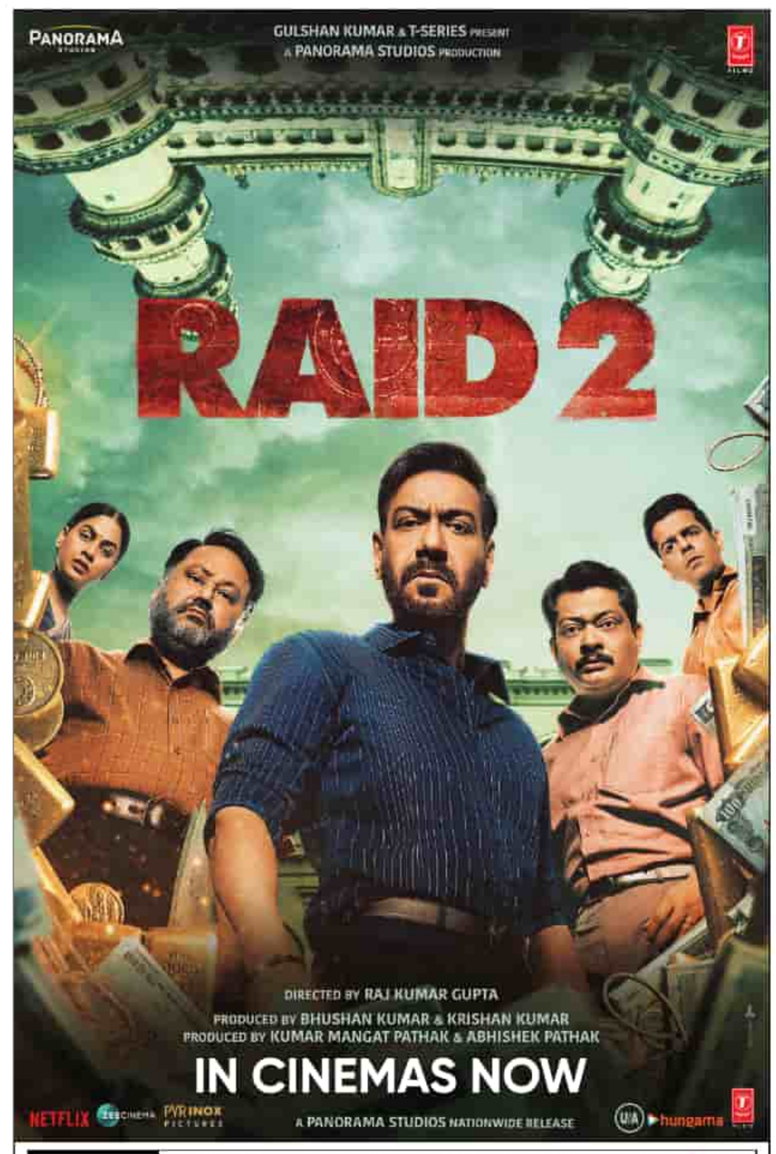
Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday revealed that he has been receiving threat calls.

He made the revelation during his Mandya trip while responding to a question from the media regarding threat calls made to Assembly Speaker UT Khader. "I also get threat calls - we can't help it. The Police Department has been informed. We have instructed them to trace those making the threat calls and to take appropriate action." Asked whether he has received threat calls, Siddaramaiah confirmed it. "Yes, I have also got threat calls."

Bomb hoax at DC offices

Extensive search operations were carried out at the offices of Chamarajanagara and Raichur Deputy Commissioners in Karnataka on Friday following bomb threats received via email, police said. Nothing suspicious was found on the premises of the two offices and they turned out to be a "hoax" email threat, they said.

All those present in the offices of the respective Deputy Commissioners were evacuated safely and a thorough search operation was carried out by the police and the bomb disposal squads. The subject of the email received at one of the DC offices read: "Pahalgam: RDX based IEDs placed in Karnataka Raichur DEO building, Evacuate Officers/Staff by 3PM." "We received a call at around 10.30 am about a bomb threat email sent to the Chamarajanagara DC office," a police officer said. —Agencies



PVR

FORUM MALL -9:05 AM, 10:50 AM, 1:45 PM, 4:40 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | ORION MALL : 10:50 AM, 1:45 PM, 4:40 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | VAISHNAVI MALL : 10:05 AM, 1:00 PM, 3:55 PM, 6:50 PM, 9:45 PM | REGALIA : 11:20 AM, 1:45 PM, 4:55 PM, 7:20 PM, 10:30 PM | BHARTIYA CINEMA -Thanisandra : 12:25 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:25 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | VEGA CITY - 10:05 AM, 10:15 AM, 12:35 PM, 1:00 PM, 3:55 PM, 4:30 PM, 6:50 PM, 7:25 PM, 9:45 PM,10:20 PM | MARKET CITY : 10:50 AM, 1:45 PM, 4:40 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | VR MALL : 9:20 AM, 10:35 AM, 12:15 PM, 1:15 PM, 3:10 PM, 6:05 PM, 7:25 PM, 10:30 PM | SPIRIT MALL : 11:20 AM, 4:55 PM, 10:30 PM | REX DIRECTOR CUT - M.G. Road : 12:10 PM, 5:20 PM, 10:30 PM | GT WORLD - Mysore : 12:15 PM | AURA MALL - Mysore | ORION UPTOWN MALL - Mysore : 10:35 AM, 12:55 PM, 2:15 PM, 7:05 PM, 10:00 PM | GLOBAL MALL - Nayandalli : 9:35 AM, 1:15 PM, 4:10 PM, 7:05 PM, 10:20 PM | FALCON CITY - Kankapura Road : 10:50 AM, 1:45 PM, 4:40 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | FORUM MALL - Mysore | GARUDA MALL - Mysore | FORUM FIZ MALL - Mangaluru.

INOX

GARUDA MALL - Magrath Road :9:50 AM, 1:15 PM, 4:10 PM, 7:25 PM, 10:30 PM | LIDO : 10:10 AM, 12:55 PM, 7:15 PM, 10:30 PM | MANTRI MALL : 9:40 AM, 12:50 PM, 3:50 PM, 7:25 PM, 10:10 PM | GARUDA SWAGATH MALL : 10:10 AM, 4:20 PM, 10:30 PM | CENTRAL MALL - JP Nagar : 9:10 AM, 1:25 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:00 PM | VALUE NEIGHBOURHOOD MALL : 10:20 AM, 1:25 PM, 7:35 PM, 9:50 PM | BROOKFIELD MALL :10:30 AM, 1:25 PM, 7:15 PM | GARUDA - Yelahanka : 10:00 AM, 1:05 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | RMZ MALL : 10:25 AM, 1:05 PM, 4:00 PM, 7:25 PM, 10:25 PM | SBR HORIZON : 9:50 AM, 1:05 PM, 4:20 PM, 6:55 PM | MALL OF ASIA : 10:50 AM, 1:45 PM, 4:40 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:30 PM | S MALL - Tumkur | MALL OF MYSORE (Satyam) | CENTRO - Mysore | CENTRAL MALL - Manipal.

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PARAS

At least remove the dried-up saplings, say citizens

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

an auto rickshaw driver.

Demanding the BBMP Forest Department officials take care of the saplings, Balaji Raghotham, an environmentalist, said that many saplings, planted on Old Madras Road near Baiyappanahalli Police Station and Indian Telephone Industries (ITI), near KR Puram, are withered. "The BBMP Forest Department must nurture the saplings till they grow into trees. I expect the BBMP Forest Department officials to plant saplings at the right time at the right locations," said Raghotham.

Expressing concern over the withered saplings on Infantry Road, Dr Vijay Nishanth aka Tree Doctor said the saplings are withered due to root stress or non-maintenance.

Blaming the authorities for not taking measures to nurture the saplings, Naveen Kumar S, a pedestrian, said that he has also seen stray cattle roaming on the roads. "There is no one to control the stray cattle. Many saplings were eaten by the cattle. To protect the saplings, the authorities should ensure there are no stray cattle on the roads," said Kumar.

BBMP Range Forest Officer Thimmappa said that the withered saplings would be replaced with new ones during monsoon.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mayank Mishra R/O d3-103 snn raj etternia apt kudlu bangalore, have changed my minor son's name from Atharva Mishra to Atharwa M Mishra for all future purposes.

I Mannan Faizullabhai Shakir S/O, Faizullabhai Shakir R/o No 8, Pyramid Square, Flat No 3, 19th Main, 21st Cross, J P Nagar 5th Phase, Bengaluru 560078 have changed my name to Abdemannan F Shakir.

I, SUTHEERTH.C Residing at Flat No.302, 3rd Floor, Everjoy Residency, Vallabhanagar, Jeerige Factory Road, Uttarahalli, Bangalore-560061. Have Changed my Name as VIHAAN.C vide affidavit Dated: 01.04.2025 before Notary G.DAKSHAHINI, Bangalore

I, Hemalatha R/at #5, Kanchan Krupa, 3rd Floor, Sarpentine Road, Kumarapark West, Bangalore-560020. Have changed to LATHA DEVI. vide Affdt. Dtd. 22.04.2025 Sworn Before Notary: Puttaramaiah. Bengaluru.

I, G K Thulasi W/o Kandaswamy Gandhavali Suri, Bangalore, have changed my name from Thulasi Kandaswamy to G K Thulasi (Thulasi Gandhavali Kandaswamy) for all future purposes.

I Sangeetha D/o Thanikachalam Sundaram R/o Kaggadaspura, Bangalore have changed my name from Sangeetha Thanikachalam to Sangeetha Arunkumar for all future purposes

I, Raqkiya Aman w/o Abdul Azeez Amanullah R/o No.10, 2nd main, 5th cross, Dinnur, RT nagar post, Bengaluru 560032 have changed my name to Raqkiya, I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I, Arjun Shenvi, S/o, Anil Ramanath Shenvi, R/o, #24, Gangadhar Layout, Vijayanagar, B'luru - 560040 have changed my name to Arjun Anil Shenvi For All Purposes.

I, Kandaswamy G S, S/o G N Suri, Bangalore, have changed my name from Kandaswamy Suri to Kandaswamy G S (Kandaswamy Gandhavali Suri) for all future purposes.

I, Maria D/o Kaide Johar R/o 27/26 , Mr lanit Store Street kalasipalyam Police Station, Basappa Circle Bangalore-560002 have changed my name to Maria K.M

I, Idrees Khan R/o E-802, Icon North, Thanisandra Main Road Near Elements Mall Bangalore - 560077 have changed my minor daughter's name from Mishaa Idris to Mishaa Idrees.

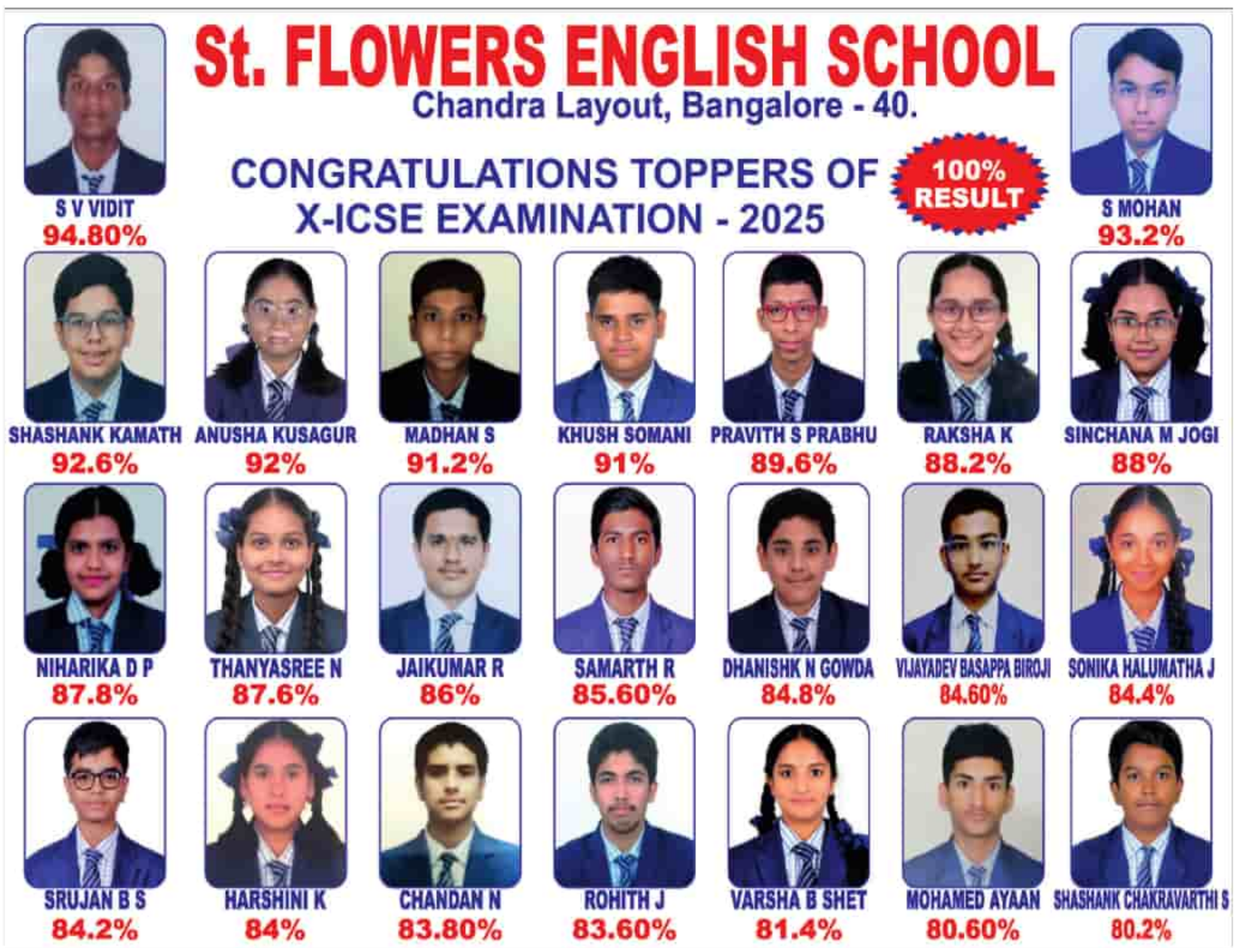
I, RASHMI B R W/O, Nagendra C, R/o No 12/1, 5th C Cross, Sharadamba Nagar, Jalahalli, Bangalore-13 have changed my name to RASHMI NAGENDRA for all purposes

I, Noorullah Abdul Ahmed Noorullah R/o 50/1, Mudalappa Cross, Near Bombay Cotton Shop , Doddamavalli B'lore-560004 have changed my name to Noorulla

I, Naziya W/o Mohammed Leyakath Ulla R/o 5/1,14th Cross,7th Main padarayapura B'lore-560026 have changed my name to Naziya Tabassum.

LOST & FOUND

I, Devendra Mohan Shukla, S/o Shiv Kumar Shukla, R/o. C-9 I.I.r. hospital, Kanpur, Kheora, Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-208002, I have lost my Sale Deed executed on 18-07-2016, Document No-BMH-1-02328-2016-17, Lost Report No. 1579346/2025 dates 24-04-2025



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 # WW II thriller
'Wonder Woman' actress Gal Gadot and actor Matthias Schoenaerts are set to star in the World War II thriller 'Ruin', reported Variety

Pairing up again?

Reports suggest Deepika may be set to join Prabhas in upcoming film

After her recent appearance in Kalki 2898 AD, Deepika Padukone has kept a low profile, with no new projects announced since the birth of her daughter, Dua. However, the wait is over as rumours are confirmed—Deepika is set to join Prabhas in the upcoming film Spirit.

According to a report in Pinkvilla, she has officially signed on for the role, sparking excitement among her fans. Spirit was originally set to begin by the end of 2024, which led Deepika to turn down the offer due to conflicting timelines caused by her pregnancy.

However, with the shooting schedule now delayed, director Vanga approached her again with a revised timeline, and Deepika has now agreed to join the film.

The report further stated that the female role in Spirit is one of the best-written characters in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's films. Deepika was impressed not only by the script but also by the depth of her character. She has expressed excitement about the role and is eager to collaborate with Vanga for the first time. Spirit will also mark the reunion of Deepika Padukone and Prabhas following their work together in Kalki 2898 AD.

According to the report, Spirit is currently in its final scripting stages, with shooting set to begin in October. The film is particularly special due to the fresh collaboration between two powerhouses—Pan India star Prabhas and renowned filmmaker Sandeep Reddy Vanga. Although the shoot was initially scheduled to start in January, it was delayed due to an injury Prabhas sustained while filming Fauji. Now, Prabhas is ready to make Spirit a grand cinematic experience.

—ETimes

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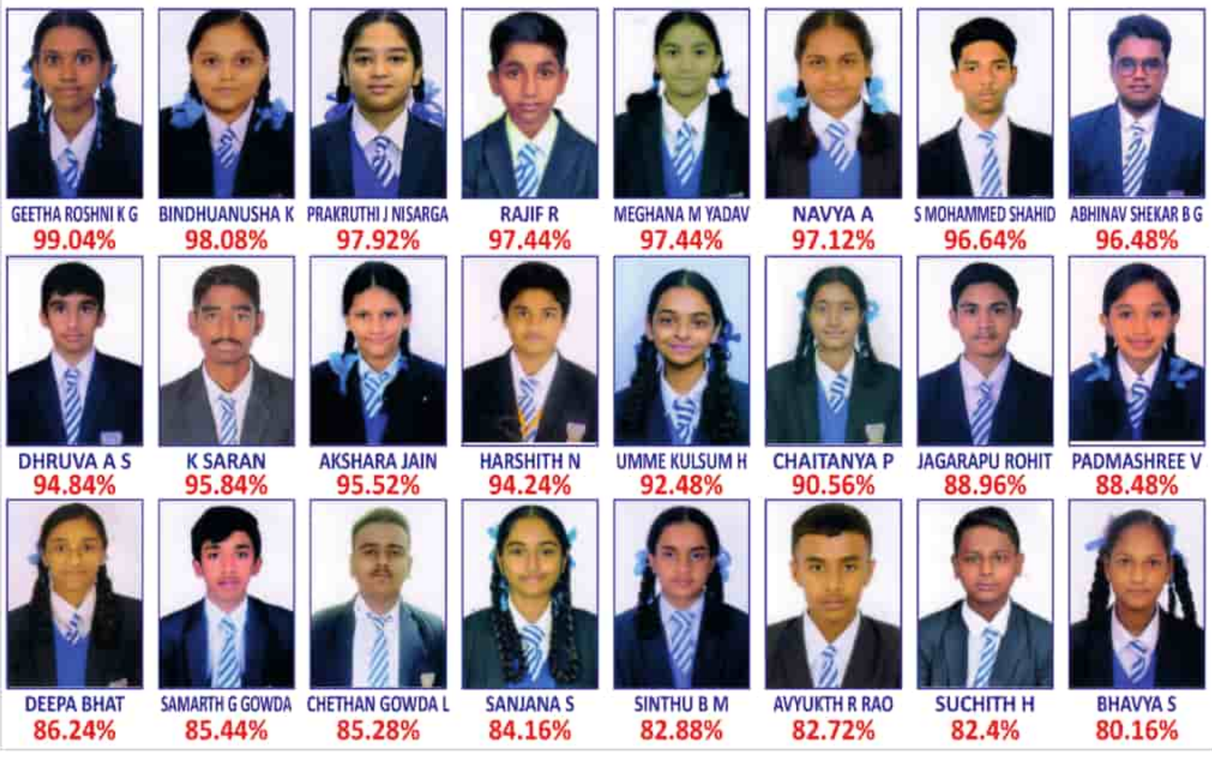

A movie with all emotions

Director Ayush Malli transports you to North Karnataka with this film though a major part of it was shot in Bengaluru. It is the actors and the dialogues in North Karnataka diction that makes audiences feel that they are in a different region. The director has given importance to the script without allowing any actor to stray from it.

Puppy aptly mirrors the lifestyle and living standards of people from North Karnataka who migrate to Bengaluru for livelihood. The director deserves appreciation for including all elements such as comedy, sentiments, love, affection and attachment in the movie. The song – Kaala Kettaitanta – is stitched very beautifully and aptly into the movie.

The movie begins with some families from North Karnataka making preparations to migrate to Bengaluru for livelihood after a drought hits their hometown. Durgappa (Durgappa Kambli), and his wife Renukamma (Renuka Desai), son Parshya (Jagadeesh K), and brother-in-law arrive in Bengaluru. They find shelter at a temporary slum near Manyata Tech Park. Durgappa joins his son Parshya to a bridge school in the slum. Parshya gets close to Aadi (Aditya G), one of the students of the bridge school. They earn money by selling pigeons and also skip school. They happened to come across a poster of a missing puppy and the reward of Rs 10,000. They fin the puppy and Parshya keeps it at his home. He succeeds in contacting the owner of the puppy.

PUPPY
3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Ayush Malli
- **ACTORS** Vditya G, Jagadeesh K, Durgappa Kambli, Renuka Desai, and Aarav Lohit Nagraj
- **Duration** 110 minutes
- **Certification** U/A

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister announces lockdown. The contractor advises migrant workers to leave for their home towns. You must watch the movie to know what happens to the puppy and Parshya.

As far as the performances of the actors are concerned, Jagadeesh Koppa steals the show with his sterling performance. He has excelled in all departments. Aditya G, Durgappa Kambli, Renuka Desai have provided good support. The puppy too has added value to this movie.

All in all, it is worth a watch.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

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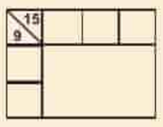
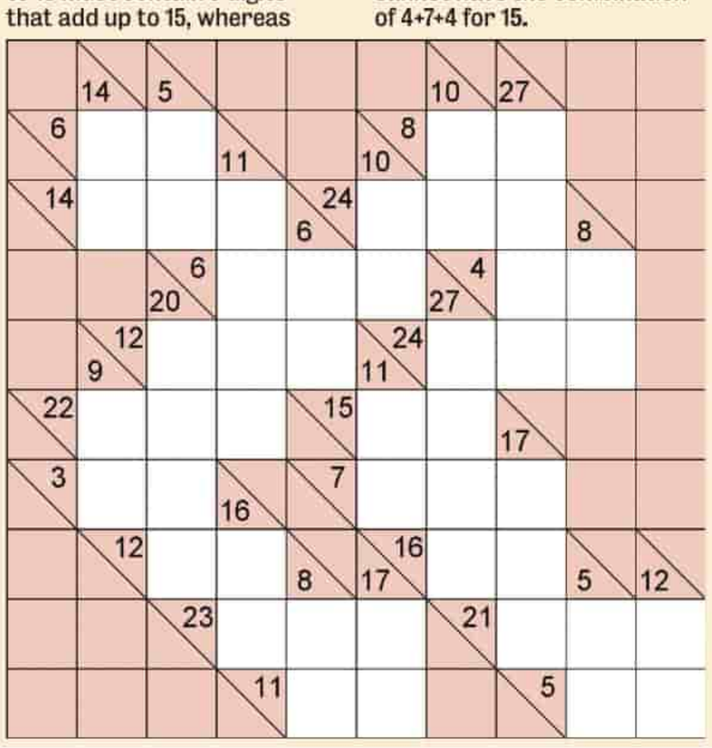
Kakuro

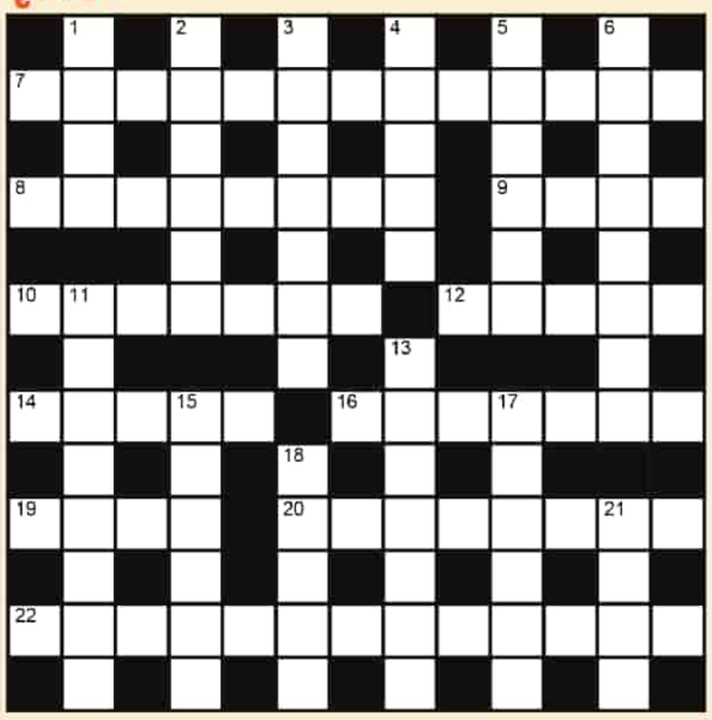
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 In __ __ __ : absolutely ship-shape? (5-3,5)
8 Short amusing tale (8)
9 Algebra or geometry, in short (4)
10 Mum and dad? (7)
12 English racecourse (5)
14 Dynasty which ruled the area around Bangalore in the 11th century (5)
16 ____ the mark : making a wayward hit, perhaps? (7)
19 Call to attract attention (4)
20 Freed from anxiety (8)
22 Big fire (13)

DOWN

1 __ __ arms : protesting strongly (2,2)
2 A hackneyed phrase or idea (6)
3 Extracts, digs out or weeds out? (7)
4 Regaled or honoured with a feast etc. (5)
5 Donald, Melania, Eric & co? (6)
6 Suspended or expelled from a university, especially in England (4,4)
11 Sticking together; tension or traction (8)
13 Former US Secretary of State ____ Clinton (7)
15 Release by exploding? (3,3)
17 Sunil or Shilpa of Bollywood (6)
18 Trojan king (5)
21 Cupid's alias (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: H EQUALS G

RAGRWX O QNLNEH JOE,
XTRKR ND EPXTNEH JPKR
IPECRKBYQ XTOE O SPPV.

Linemaro

If I were a tear in your eye i would roll down to your lips. But if you were a tear in my eye i would never cry as i would be afraid to lose you!

Mind chow

Ambition is so powerful a passion in humans, that however high we reach we are never satisfied.

Joke of the day

The boss was complaining in our staff meeting the other day that he wasn't getting any respect. Later that morning he went to a local sign shop and bought a small sign that read:"I'm the Boss!" He then taped it to his office door. Later that day when he returned from lunch, he found that someone had taped a note to the sign that said:"Your wife called, she wants her sign back!"

Loop

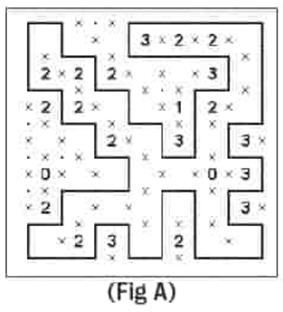
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

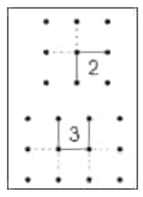
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

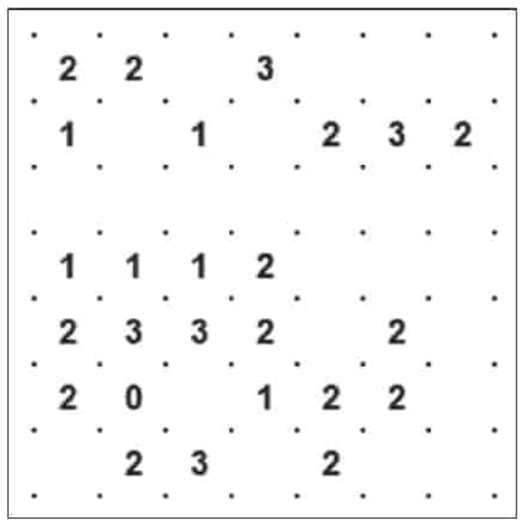
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



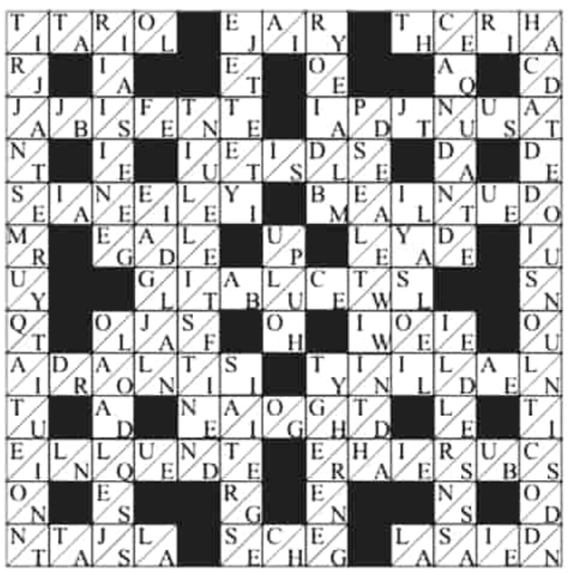
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



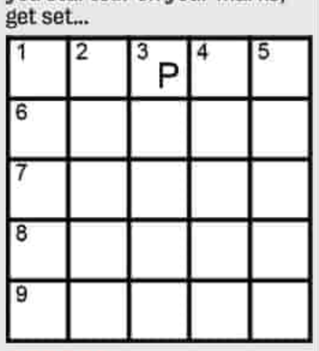
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Peary; 6 Boo ad;
7 Be mod; 8 Primo;
9 A toss

DOWN

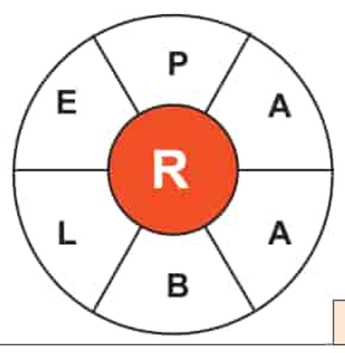
1 Or aid; 2 Medea;
3 PS mop; 4 Tabor;
5 Boyos

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?

R	T	K	N
X	V	T	Q
M	R	C	G
B	W	O	?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

13 Average; 15 Good; 17 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

				4				
9		3				1		5
2		4	5		8	3		9
		5		7		4		
6	2						9	1
		8		2		6		
4		2	8		1	7		6
5		9				2		4
				5				

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

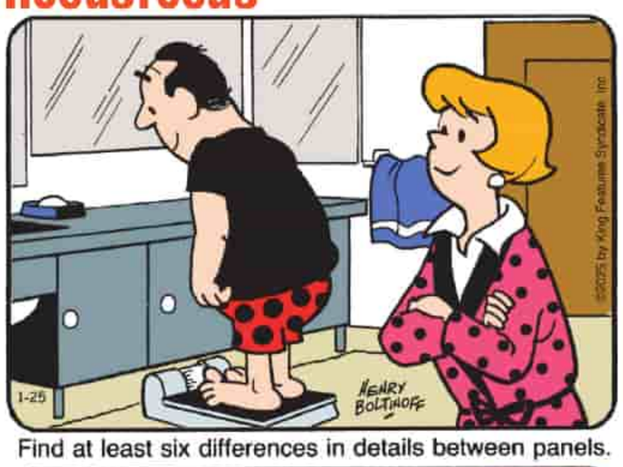
Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 14
1 3 4 8

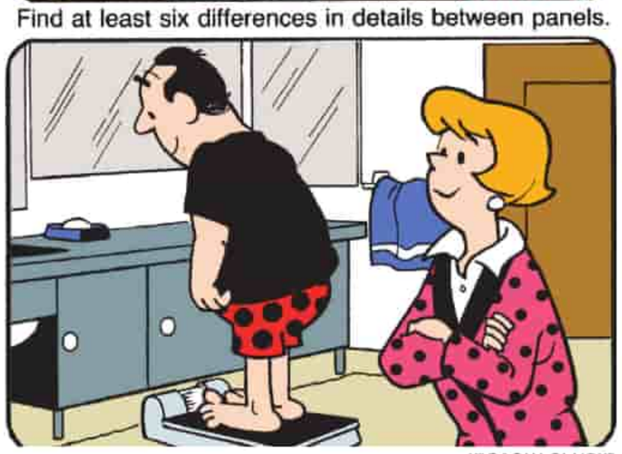
Medium = 5
2 3 3 7

Hard = 10
2 5 5 8

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



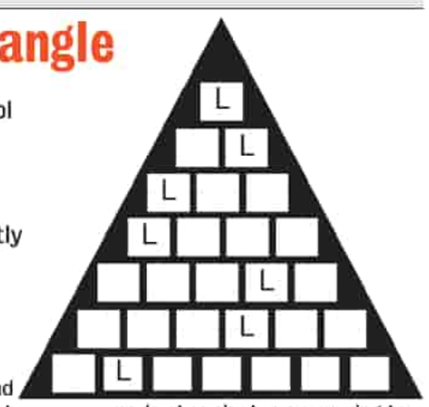
Differences: 1. Man is taller. 2. Belt is missing. 3. Button is added. 4. Man's sleeve is longer. 5. Scale is longer. 6. Soap dish is moved.

Riddler

It goes up but at the same time goes down. Up toward the sky and down toward the ground. It's present tense and past tense too; Come for a ride just me and you. What is it?

Alpha triangle

1 Litre
2 Aluminium symbol
3 Boy
4 on: entice
5 Transactions
6 Ascended
7 Disagreed violently

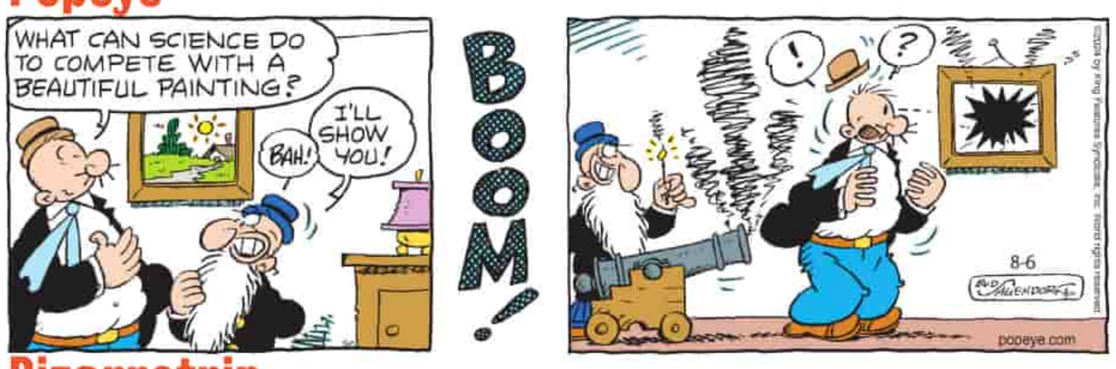


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

And now, a word from the National Council on Thongs:
BOOYAH!
©2025 creators.com 1/25
www.creators.com
This has been a word from the National Council on Thongs.

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
You are blessed by the Moon today, boosting your confidence and decision-making ability. You'll seize new opportunities without hesitation. Planning for higher studies and engaging in intellectual exchanges with learned individuals could be highly fruitful.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may feel low in energy and struggle to complete your tasks, which could dent your confidence. Past investments may yield negative returns. Avoid arguments over trivial matters, and be cautious about spending on non-essential items.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You're full of energy today, and your efficient performance at work will likely be recognized. Confidence grows as your efforts start bearing fruit. Property disputes with siblings may be resolved, and networking with influential individuals may prove beneficial. Short trips could also be planned.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
The Moon brings positivity and happiness today. Your communication skills may help you secure a major order. Your courteous nature earns you respect, and with strong support from colleagues, you'll make bold business decisions with confidence.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
With the Moon's blessing, you'll enjoy high energy and satisfaction in your work. Romantic time with your spouse will enhance domestic harmony. Planning a new project is favorable now, as your perfectionism aids in strategy and design. Job seekers may find success, but lovebirds should avoid petty arguments.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Old health issues may resurface, leading to frustration. You may act impatiently, which could result in poor decisions—so slow down and reflect. Watch your spending habits and avoid unnecessary purchases.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
The Moon brings joy and productivity today. You may see positive returns from past investments, and your ability to make quick decisions at work could result in future financial gains.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
You'll be immersed in work, and your network will be instrumental in executing your plans. Wisdom from past experiences may result in financial gains. Domestic harmony will deepen as you share romantic moments with your spouse.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
The Moon's blessing revives your enthusiasm. Recent challenges fade, and your persistence will now be rewarded. With help from subordinates, previously delayed tasks will gain momentum. Financially, business gains are on the horizon.

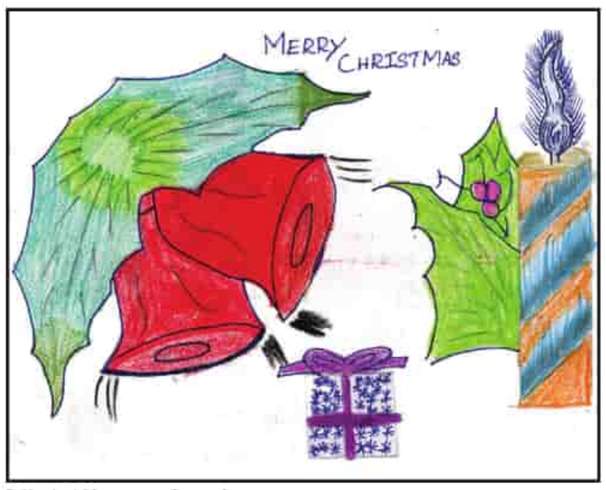
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You may feel dull or under the weather today. Postpone any new investments or business ventures, as these could lead to losses. Avoid major decisions and proceed cautiously.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You're feeling enthusiastic, and this momentum helps drive your projects forward. Swift decisions may benefit your business, and you could start an innovative partnership. However, avoid investing in fixed assets with partners for now.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Blessed by the Moon, you're in good health, and previous health concerns may resolve. You might recover delayed payments and consider applying for a loan to purchase luxury items.

KIDZONE

Raghunandan, Bengaluru



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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= 29i / (28 × 27i +27i)=
= 29i / (27i (28+1))
= (29*28*27i) / (29*27i)
= 28

RIDDLER A seesaw

QUOTE UNCODE
Except a living man, there is nothing more wonderful than a book.

BULL'S EYE
abler, arable, area, baler, bare, bear, blare, blear, earl, paler, PARABLE, pare, pear, pearl, rape, real, reap

FAST FIVE

R	E	P	A	Y
A	D	O	B	O
D	E	M	O	B
I	M	P	R	O
O	A	S	T	S

STRIKE OUT

N	A	S	A	■	E	C	E	■	L	A	I	N	■	■
O	■	E	■	G	■	E	■	S	■	O	■	■	■	■
I	L	L	U	D	E	■	R	H	E	S	U	S	■	■
T	■	D	■	E	I	G	H	T	■	E	■	I	■	■
A	D	O	N	I	S	■	T	I	L	D	E	N	■	■
T	■	O	A	F	■	O	■	W	O	E	■	U	■	■
U	■	G	I	B	L	E	T	S	■	■	■	N	■	■
M	■	G	A	L	■	P	■	L	Y	E	■	I	■	■
S	A	N	E	L	Y	■	M	A	L	T	E	D	■	■
N	■	I	■	U	T	I	L	E	■	A	■	E	■	■
A	B	S	E	N	T	■	A	D	J	U	S	T	■	■
R	■	I	■	E	■	E	■	Q	■	■	■	C	■	■
T	A	R	O	■	J	A	R	■	H	E	R	A	■	■

QUICK

■	N	■	F	■	M	■	Y	■	Y	■	S	■	■	■
C	O	N	F	L	A	G	R	A	T	I	O	N	■	■
■	I	■	O	■	I	■	A	■	T	■	R	■	■	■
P	S	S	T	■	R	E	L	I	E	V	E	D	■	■
■	E	■	■	P	■	L	■	H	■	■	■	■	■	■
C	H	O	L	A	■	M	I	S	S	I	N	G	■	■
■	D	■	■	S	■	H	■	■	■	W	■	■	■	■
P	A	R	E	N	T	S	■	A	S	C	O	T	■	■
■	H	■	■	O	■	D	■	P	■	D	■	■	■	■
A	N	E	C	D	O	T	E	■	M	A	T	H	■	■
I	■	R	■	T	■	U	■	N	■	■	■	■	■	■
A	P	P	L	E	P	I	E	O	R	D	E	R	■	■
U	■	C	■	U	■	F	■	T	■	S	■	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE
K. Split the diagram in half horizontally and vertically. Start in the top left square of each quarter, and move clockwise around the other squares in the quarter. In each quarter, letters advance through the alphabet in steps of 2 for the upper left quarter, 3 for the upper right, 4 for the lower right and 5 for the lower left.

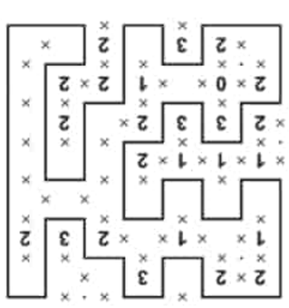
SUDOKU

8	7	6	2	5	4	9	1	3
5	1	9	6	3	7	2	8	4
4	3	2	8	9	1	7	5	6
1	4	8	9	2	5	6	3	7
6	2	7	4	8	3	5	9	1
3	9	5	1	7	6	4	2	8
2	6	4	5	1	8	3	7	9
9	8	3	7	6	2	1	4	5
7	5	1	3	4	9	8	6	2

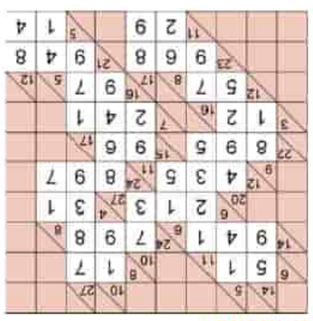
ALPHA TRIANGLE
L, Al, Lad, Lead, Deals, Scaled, Clashed.

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 + 4 − 1 + 8 = 14
Medium
3 + 7 − 2 − 3 = 5
Hard
2 x 5 / 5 + 8 = 10

LOOP



KAKURO



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